CANADA

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SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR GOVERNMENT CONT'D

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SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC

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CANADA

ROYAL COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

J. GRANT GLASSCO

F. EUGÈNE THERRIEN

WATSON SELLAR

To His Excellency

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL

May It Please Your Excellency

We, the Commissioners appointed by Order in Council dated 16th September, 1960 to inquire into and report upon the organization and methods of the departments and agencies of the Government of Canada and to make recommendations concerning the matters more specifically set forth in the Order in Council dated 16th September, 1960: Beg to submit to Your Excellency the following Reports.

CHAIRMAN

December 3rd, 1962

CANADA

Elizabeth the Second

BY THE GRACE OF GOD ✻
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,
CANADA ✻ AND HER OTHER
REALMS AND TERRITORIES

Queen

HEAD OF THE COMMONWEALTH
DEFENDER OF THE FAITH ✻

DEPUTY GOVERNOR GENERAL

DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME OR WHOM THE SAME MAY IN ANYWISE CONCERN,

Greeting:

WHEREAS pursuant to the provisions of Part I of the Inquiries Act, chapter 154 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1952, His Excellency the Governor in Council, by Order P.C. 1960-1269 of the sixteenth day of September, in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty, a copy of which is hereto annexed, has authorized the appointment of our Commissioners therein and hereinafter named to inquire into and report upon the organization and methods of operation of the departments and agencies of the Government of Canada and to recommend the changes therein which they consider would best promote efficiency, economy and improved service in the despatch of public business, and in particular but without restricting the generality of the foregoing, to report upon steps that may be taken for the purpose of

- eliminating duplication and overlapping of services;
- eliminating unnecessary or uneconomic operations;
- achieving efficiency or economy through further decentralization of operations and administration;
- achieving improved management of departments and agencies, or portions thereof, with consideration to organization, methods of work, defined authorities and responsibilities, and provision for training;
- making more effective use of budgeting, accounting and other financial measures as means of achieving more efficient and economical management of departments and agencies;
- improving efficiency and economy by alterations in the relations between government departments and agencies, on the one hand, and the Treasury Board and other central control or service agencies of the government on the other; and
- achieving efficiency or economy through reallocation or regrouping of units of the public service.

and has conferred certain rights, powers and privileges upon Our said Commissioners as will by reference to the said Order more fully appear.

NOW KNOW YE that, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council for Canada, We do by these Presents nominate, constitute and appoint J. Grant Glassco, Esquire, of the City of Toronto, in the Province of Ontario; Robert Watson Sellar, Esquire, of the City of Ottawa, in the Province of Ontario; and F. Eugene Therrien, Esquire, of the City of Montreal, in the Province of Quebec, to be Our Commissioners to conduct such inquiry.

TO HAVE, hold, exercise and enjoy the said office, place and trust unto the said J. Grant Glassco, Robert Watson Sellar and F. Eugene Therrien, together with the

rights, powers, privileges and emoluments unto the said office, place and trust of right and by law appertaining during Our Pleasure.

AND WE DO hereby direct that the scope of the inquiry shall not extend to the institution of Parliament.

AND WE DO hereby authorize Our said Commissioners to exercise all the powers conferred upon them by section 11 of the Inquiries Act and be assisted to the fullest extent by government departments and agencies.

AND WE DO hereby authorize Our said Commissioners to adopt such procedure and methods as they may from time to time deem expedient for the proper conduct of the inquiry and sit at such times and at such places in Canada as they may decide from time to time.

AND WE DO hereby authorize Our said Commissioners to engage the services of such counsel, staff and technical advisers as they may require at rates of remuneration and reimbursement to be approved by the Treasury Board.

AND WE DO hereby require and direct Our said Commissioners to report their findings to Our Governor in Council, making interim reports as progress is made, with the final report to be made within a period of two years.

AND WE DO hereby require and direct Our said Commissioners to file with the Dominion Archivist the papers and records of the Commission as soon as reasonably may be after the conclusion of the inquiry.

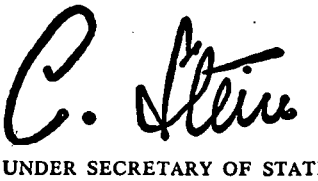
AND WE FURTHER appoint J. Grant Glassco, Esquire, to be Chairman of Our said Commissioners.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Canada to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS: The Honourable Patrick Kerwin, Chief Justice of Canada and Deputy of Our Trusty and Well-beloved Major-General George Philias Vanier, Companion of Our Distinguished Service Order upon whom We have conferred Our Military Cross and Our Canadian Forces' Decoration, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

AT OTTAWA, this Twenty-seventh day of September in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty and in the ninth year of Our Reign.

By Command,



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SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR GOVERNMENT

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PUBLISHED BY THE QUEEN'S PRINTER • OTTAWA • CANADA FOR THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The detailed investigation of the economic and statistical services of the federal government was undertaken by a Project Group under the direction of Professor E. F. Beach, PH.D., *McGill University*, Montreal.

Several Project Officers were associated with this endeavour, and your Commissioners, in recording their names below wish to acknowledge the assistance received:

Professor H. Scott Gordon, M.A., *Carleton University*, Ottawa
Professor A. Asimakopulos, *McGill University*, Montreal
M. Maxwell-Fisher, M.A., *Graham Associates Limited*, Montreal

Also included in this report are the details of the investigation into the external paperwork of the federal government and your Commissioners wish to acknowledge the assistance received from the Project Officers who were associated with this study:

Michel Chevalier, *Chevalier Associates*, Montreal
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Peter E. Ross, B.COMM., *Bell Telephone Company of Canada*, Montreal
G. L. Filippelli, B.SC., *The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited*, Montreal

A number of briefs and submissions bearing on this subject were considered and these are duly recorded in the final volume of your Commissioners' reports.

Your Commissioners, in acknowledging the assistance and advice received, dissociate all those named above from any of the findings and conclusions contained in this report; for these, your Commissioners assume full responsibility.

1

INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that 700 professional economists and statisticians are employed in the federal service and that, in addition, some 2,300 auxiliary and non-professional personnel are engaged in economic and statistical work. The federal government spends approximately $14 million annually on the salaries of these 3,000 employees; about two-thirds of this sum is for statistical work, the remainder for economic analysis. Taking into account other related expenses, the total cost of economic and statistical services is found to be approximately $20 million a year.

Considering the importance of these operations to effective government and the size and diversity of the areas to be covered, the current level of expenditure can be described as modest, probably unduly so. The changes and improvements in this field of activity that appear desirable to your Commissioners will, in fact, result in a net increase in expenditure. No other result seems possible if the present quality of statistical work is to be maintained and pressing needs adequately met.

The Civil Service Commission uses the terms "economist" and "statistician" as classifications of professional personnel, but those so described include by no means all who are working as economists and statisticians in the public service. Many professionals included in other classifications, such as "Combines Investigation Officers" or "Trade and Commerce Officers", are in fact doing the work of economists or, to a lesser extent, of statisticians. On the other hand, some professionals classified as economists might be more accurately described otherwise. For example, a few departments and agencies

employ sociologists and these are usually classified as economists because no "sociologist" classification exists.

The organization of economic analysis and statistical operations, respectively, shows important variations in departments and agencies. Professional statisticians are found mainly in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics; elsewhere, it is rare to find groups of more than two or three. Auxiliary non-professional statistical workers tend to be more widely dispersed throughout departments and agencies, usually doing routine clerical work. The Departments of National Health and Welfare and Labour are exceptions to the existing pattern of statistical centralization.

Professional economists are much more widely distributed throughout the service, and sizeable groups are to be found working together in about a dozen places. The Department of Agriculture employs more than 80 economists, almost twice as many as the Department of Labour, the next largest group. There are significant numbers in the Bank of Canada and in the Departments of Trade and Commerce, Finance, and National Health and Welfare; smaller but substantial groups work in the Departments of Fisheries, Justice (Combines Investigation Officers), Mines and Technical Surveys (Mineral Economists), External Affairs, and in the Department of Transport and its affiliated agencies. With some exceptions, economists are usually organized in groups large enough to comprise separate divisions within departments or agencies.

The highly concentrated organization of statistical operations in the public service reflects a deliberate policy decision, taken forty-five years ago, to create a central statistical agency, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. In contrast, no specific policy has been enunciated with respect to economic analysis, which developed into an organized activity employing substantial staffs only during World War II. At the end of the war, some envisaged that economic analysis would, like statistics, be developed as a centralized activity, but the trend over the last fifteen years has been decidely in the opposite direction—towards dispersion rather than centralization. Thus two important staff services, essential to both national and administrative needs and necessarily interdependent, have developed in quite different ways.

This report examines the adequacy of existing arrangements for making economic and statistical services available for the formulation of policy, for administrative decisions, and for the service and enlightenment of the public. In particular your Commissioners have directed their enquiries to certain considerations of major importance, which may be briefly summarized as follows:

- The effective use by government of the scarce professional skills of economists and statisticians.
- The extent of duplication in broad studies of the economy undertaken respectively by the Bank of Canada and the Departments of Finance and Trade and Commerce.
- The scale of participation by government economists in management and various stages of policy development.
- The degree to which the management and policy needs of the government are adequately served by its central statistical organization.
- The status and independence of the Dominion Statistician, and the extent of his responsibility for and control over the whole of the government's statistical operations.
- The relations of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics with respondents and with the public generally.

2

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

THE MAIN SUB-DIVISIONS

Discussion of economic analysis may be clarified by making some distinctions between the diverse activities in which economists are engaged. With out making any absolute claim for this classification, three types of activity may be distinguished: economic research, current economic intelligence, and specific investigations.

Economic Research

Economic research is the work of building up long-run knowledge of the economy, attempting to discover whatever regularities there may be in economic processes, or endeavouring to arrive at detailed and profound explanations of important economic changes and occurrences. This work may not be immediately useful to government but provides the foundation of knowledge and understanding on which the more current work must be based. The research work of economists in the public service does not differ greatly from that of economists who are either attached to universities or employed by private research organizations.

Economic research may be general or specific: that is, it may be concerned with matters of pervasive significance for the whole of the Canadian economy; or it may be concerned with a specific, limited segment such as air transport or fisheries. Economic research of the general type is conducted by only a handful of professional economists in the public service, and only some of these devote a major part of their time to this work. The Economics Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce is the principal location of

general economic research; some is also undertaken in the Bank of Canada and the Department of Labour, but to a lesser extent.

Economic research of the specific type is more common. Some departments concerned with particular aspects of Canadian economic life, such as health or forest resources, recognize the value of long-range fundamental research, both in administration and in the formulation of policy, but others do not. In agriculture, for example, there is a great and unfulfilled need for economic research, although the Department of Agriculture employs a large number of economists.

Economic Intelligence

The second type of economic analysis, current economic intelligence, is directed to keeping abreast of current developments, in Canada and elsewhere, that may have an important bearing on the work of the department in which the economist is employed. Again, a distinction has to be drawn between the general and the specific. Some economists, perhaps best exemplified by those in the Bank of Canada and the Departments of Finance and Trade and Commerce, are engaged in general economic intelligence; they are constantly observing economic trends and developments, both national and international, which may have widespread significance for the whole Canadian economy. Other economic intelligence analysts have a more limited concern—perhaps the market for a particular commodity, or the development of a particular industry.

The function of the economic intelligence analyst is two-fold. First, by keeping abreast of economic developments of interest to his department, he is able to advise administrators and policy-makers promptly when significant changes are under way. Thus the policy and administration of the department are founded on better knowledge and implementation can proceed with quicker response. Second, his knowledge is available, at the call of the administrator and policy-maker, to assist in solving departmental problems as they arise.

The work of some government economists consists almost entirely of current economic intelligence; they conduct neither research nor specific investigations. But it would be misleading to make too sharp a distinction between current economic intelligence and other economic analysis, because all good economists try to keep up to date on developments in their own fields of interest. Nevertheless, the distinction is important in understanding the kinds of services that government economists are called upon to render.

Specific Investigations

Specific or *ad hoc* investigations undertaken by economists are closely related to the policy and administrative work of their departments or agencies. The starting point is usually a request or query from the minister or a senior official; any economic analysis is solely for the purpose of satisfying the immediate need for economic information or advice, and the work usually ends when this particular need is met. A particular investigation may occupy the economist for an hour or for several months, and may result in a single-page memorandum or a hundred-page report. Occasionally, specific investigations disclose important areas for further investigation and may be extended, developing in effect into economic research; typically, however, they are very brief.

THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

In evaluating the state of economic analysis in the public service, it must be appreciated that this is a very recent development as a government activity in Canada. The history of many economic analysis units does not extend back beyond World War II; most of the personnel, from the directors down, have entered the public service since 1945.

Considering the newness of economic analysis as a substantial governmental function, its continued rapid growth, and the relative youth of most of its practitioners, a certain degree of disorganization and unevenness in performance may be expected. These are present, to be sure, but on the whole economic analysis has flourished in the government environment. Young men of skill and imagination have been able to influence the development and organization of the work, which is of high quality.

The conditions that promote and stimulate good work do not seem to be significantly different from those that hamper it. On the one hand, economists are most productive when they believe that their work is useful and has an influence on important decisions; on the other, an economist working exclusively on a series of *ad hoc* studies may wish that senior officials did not find him quite so useful. A competent economist frequently makes a good director of an economic analysis branch; from there it is but a short step to a purely administrative post in the department, and he is an economist no longer. Although the task of developing and sustaining economic analysis is made more difficult, very little can be done, or ought to be done, to discourage the movement of economists into higher administrative posts. Talented administrators are just as scarce as economists, and it would be a

mistake for the public service to deny itself any fruitful source of good administrators.

Indeed, the recruitment of administrators from the ranks of economists may help, in time, to eliminate one of the present handicaps under which economic research operates: in some departments senior administrators have only a cloudy conception of economic analysis, which usually results in an attitude of naive scepticism towards economists in general. The mere engagement of a number of economists is not particularly productive if senior officials do not understand how these professionals can contribute to the work of the department.

Your Commissioners have found that the chief factor limiting the quality and productivity of economic analysis is the pressure of *ad hoc* investigations. These may be a valuable source of interesting leads for research, but this value will be realized only if the economists are given the time and encouraged to follow these leads. In some departments, the unremitting pressure of *ad hoc* analysis is so great as to cause frustration, resulting in recurrent losses of the most promising young economists.

In some cases, these pressures could be considerably relieved by staff increases. But to say this does not go to the heart of the matter by any means. The Department of Finance, where economic research is stunted by lack of staff, has made little attempt to relieve the pressure, apparently preferring to have a lean staff rather than to pursue economic research, and to rely on other departments for the foundation of its own *ad hoc* economic studies. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that research flourishes where the number of economists is large. In the Department of Agriculture, with the largest economic analysis organization in the government, the pressure of *ad hoc* projects is so great that virtually no economic research is done, although the agriculture economy has undergone profound change in recent times and a fundamental understanding of the process is absolutely vital.

The effective employment of economists is not especially difficult, subject to two essential rules: the economist must be given work that is important and demands the use of his special skill and training, and he should have at least some time to follow up significant lines of investigation. No specific form of organization will assure the fulfilment of these conditions; to maintain a healthy and productive economic analysis unit in each department or agency, a proper environment must be created and fostered by the senior officials concerned. There should be some means whereby the verification of any notable failure in this regard might be initiated and sponsored from outside the department, and exceptional cases should be the objects of specific study.

Your Commissioners are satisfied that, having regard to the widely dispersed and varied needs for economic analysis in the public service, it would be impracticable to establish a central economic bureau which would second economists to departments and agencies in need of their services. However, the Personnel Division of the Treasury Board should maintain an active and continuous interest in the development of career opportunities for economists, as for other professional public servants, by establishing equitable scales of remuneration, by stimulating the use of outside professionals (as suggested later in this report) while encouraging government economists to engage in extramural professional and academic activities, and by fostering a programme of interdepartmental transfers designed to broaden professional experience and development.

ROYAL COMMISSIONS

A special word should be said about royal commissions, for many have been directed toward economic problems. A royal commission is, by its nature, an *ad hoc* investigation; it is created to study and give advice on a problem of immediate concern. But a royal commission is often established when important problems of public policy cannot be solved by normal internal processes, drawing simply on the existing fund of economic knowledge, and thus becomes an instrument that sponsors a great deal of new research. Probably more fundamental economic research has been done in Canada at the instance of royal commissions than by all the departments and agencies of government. Some of the economic and statistical work of the commissions has played a vital role in the development of the economic and statistical sciences in Canada.

The royal commission may be an especially productive device for a number of fairly obvious reasons: it has more latitude in securing personnel and is able to assemble superior talents from different parts of the public service, from business, and from the universities; it usually has greater financial freedom; and it has the power and prestige to collect new information that would be very difficult for departments and agencies to obtain. Freedom to publish material is also important; since the publications of royal commissions are not regarded as statements of government policy, a wide range of views may be presented without in any way committing the government. The publication of many of the research studies prepared for these commissions has added immeasurably to the growth and development of economic science in Canada.

PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH PAPERS

In notable contrast to the practice of royal commissions, most government departments and agencies publish very little of their economic research results. The Departments of Trade and Commerce and Finance publish virtually nothing; the publications of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics are confined strictly to descriptive data; the Bank of Canada, apart from monthly statistical summaries, publishes only what appears in the Annual Report of the Governor. The Departments of Labour and Agriculture publish more, but the greater part of the best economic research work done by government economists is available only for government use.

The arguments against publication are strong, but the arguments in favour of selective publication are stronger still. Preparing memoranda for publication takes time; a text designed for internal use is often not appropriate for publication. Even if more time were available, some economists would doubt the wisdom of publication because government research is usually related to matters of public policy under current consideration, and government economists are loath to become involved in public controversy through the publication of research findings.

However, these problems are not insurmountable and must be weighed against the benefits to be derived from a wider dissemination of the results of government research. Publication would contribute significantly to the promotion of research in the universities, and would lead to better informed discussion of economic issues in Canada. Economic journalism in Canada, still inadequate by comparison with standards achieved in the United Kingdom and the United States, would be greatly assisted by the publication of articles by government economists, which would disseminate the results of important research to a wider circle. A publication similar to the United States Department of Commerce *Survey of Current Business,* containing a current review of major trends in the Canadian economy and signed articles by government economists and statisticians, would be a commendable government undertaking.

CO-ORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES

The dispersal of economic analysis throughout the public service suggests the possibility of a duplication of effort that might be eliminated by greater co-ordination and centralization. Your Commissioners have concluded that consolidation of these activities in a central economic bureau is not appropriate. Rather, the several departments and agencies concerned should continue to do their own economic analysis, and should develop staff specifically trained

and equipped to meet the needs of both policy and administration. Co-ordination is now sought through interdepartmental committees, and through the less formal contacts between economists working on similar problems who get to know one another and meet to share experience, methods and information. As staffs increase, the obstacles to informal association become greater, but the foundations of effective co-ordination are already laid in the interdepartmental committee system.

It might be presumed that, because four departments or agencies severally devote substantial effort to general economic intelligence, some wasteful duplication is inevitable, but an informed appreciation of the nature of the work undertaken leads to the opposite conclusion. Approaches from various angles are essential in considering current economic trends and developments, and economic judgments can be more soundly based on these varied approaches than on any single approach. For this reason, any apparent duplication in the current general economic intelligence activities of the federal government should not be regarded as a waste of public funds.

The development of comprehensive economic policy is the responsibility of the Cabinet, and it is likely that the evolution of governmental functions will draw a growing amount of ministerial attention in this direction. Machinery may be required for effective presentation of the results of economic analysis to those who formulate the general economic policy of the government. In departments, the internal organization generally ensures the impact of economic analysis on departmental policy and responsibilities, but machinery is needed for the construction of a general economic policy, traversing the whole range of government operations and providing a coherent framework and context for the particular departmental policies.

The need to integrate economic programmes into a unified economic policy of comprehensive scope has been recognized in a number of countries. Although this raises considerations that run beyond the subject of this report, it may be useful to outline briefly the organizations that have been created for this purpose in France, Great Britain, and the United States.

In France, the Commissariat Général du Plan, which is the oldest and, in many ways, the most far-reaching of these organizations, was created in 1946 to develop the first post-war programme for the reconstruction and expansion of basic industry. The Commissariat, originally a branch of the Prime Minister's Office, was later put under the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs without being incorporated into his department. The staff numbers only 140, some of whom are temporarily detached from government departments, and much of the work is done in co-operation with other agencies, notably the Economic and Financial Studies Service of

the Ministry of Finance. Compact organization and the use of departmental staff on secondment are deliberately designed to reduce conflicts of responsibility and fit the Commissariat smoothly into the machinery of government.

The Commissariat prepares a detailed forecast of the French economy on the basis of certain fundamental government policy decisions. This forecast is discussed with twenty-five "Modernization Commissions", which comprise representatives of management, labour and other interests for particular industries, before the Commissariat works out a final synthesis and the programme becomes official. This is, in effect, a method of joint forecasting and planning by the public and private sectors of the economy. The role played by economic analysis is apparent in laying the preliminary set of alternatives before the government, in constructing the forecast that is to go to the Modernization Commissions after the government has made certain basic decisions, and in synthesizing the results of the subsequent reviews by, and discussions with, the Commissions. The creation of a central economic analysis staff and the decision to develop an integrated economic policy obviously went hand in hand.

In the United Kingdom, the recently created National Economic Development Council is modelled to a considerable extent on the French Commissariat. As in France, the new body is linked to the Treasury but is not part of the ordinary departmental machinery. The Council itself has twenty members drawn from industry, labour, the universities and the government; the Chancellor of the Exchequer is chairman and the Minister of Labour is a member. The Council is served by a staff composed largely of people on secondment for two or three years from the civil service, industry and elsewhere. The purpose of the Council is to ensure a continuous central study of the plans and prospects of the principal industries, to correlate them one with another and with the government's plans for the public sector, and to relate the whole to the likely course of the economy and the prospective balance of payments. As in France, the need for a central economic analysis staff to fulfil these functions is apparent.

None of the economic agencies of the United States Government can be said to engage in the formal collaboration with the private sector which is the prominent feature of the French and British arrangements for economic forecasting and planning. The Council of Economic Advisers does, however, undertake analyses in depth and long-term projections similar to those of the National Economic Development Council in the United Kingdom and the Commissariat Général du Plan in France. The Council is located in the executive office of the President and is exempt from the civil service laws as to

hiring and salaries; its main functions are described in the United States Government Organization Manual as follows:

> The Council analyzes the national economy and its various segments; advises the President on economic developments; appraises the economic programs and policies of the Federal Government; recommends to the President policies for economic growth and stability; and assists in the preparation of the economic reports of the President to the Congress.

The council of Economic Advisers was originally set up under the *Employment Act* of 1946, and was particularly directed to gather, analyze and interpret information in relation to the policy objectives laid down in that Act. The Council was given powers of consultation with state and local governments, industry, labour and other outside groups, and was directed to utilize, to the fullest possible extent, the services, facilities and information (including statistical information) of other government and private research agencies. With a sizeable staff of economists, the Council constitutes the central economic analysis organization for the United States Government.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendations made by your Commissioners in Volume 1 of their reports, on the organization and respective responsibilities of the Treasury Board and the Department of Finance, have a direct bearing on the formulation and integration of economic policy in Canada, and on the need for a central economic analysis staff. With the responsibility for central management assigned to the Treasury Board, the Department of Finance should become more positively oriented to its responsibility for the formulation of a comprehensive economic policy; although financial policy would continue to be the most immediate concern, the Department should act as the coordinator of all important aspects of economic policy. The economic analysis work of the Department should be greatly expanded so as to fill out existing gaps in the areas covered; more specifically, a central economic staff should be evolved from the existing organization to develop the scientific foundations for the general economic policy of the government.

No immediate transfer of functions between the Department of Finance and other departments is contemplated. It might seem logical, for example, that the economic forecasting now undertaken by the Economics Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce should be transferred to the Department of Finance, or that work on international trade negotiations should be transferred from the Department of Finance to the Department of Trade and Commerce. These re-allocations might be desirable in time, but they should be left for consideration as the Department of Finance evolves into its proper role.

The immediate concern is the development of a competent central economic staff within the Department of Finance, not to take over work done elsewhere but rather, under the direction of the Minister of Finance, to attend to the development of general economic policy for the government as a whole. To whatever extent, if at all, external co-operation in government economic planning may be sought in the future, the Department would logically serve as a focal point for the collection and dissemination of economic information.

We therefore recommend that: The Department of Finance undertake the conduct of central economic analysis for the purpose of aiding the development and co-ordination of general economic policy.

RESEARCH OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC SERVICE

In Canada, economic research outside the public service is undertaken primarily in the universities. Academic economists, under no pressure to serve immediate administrative needs, are able to follow fundamental lines of investigation more freely than government economists. Much of the university research is of direct benefit to the federal government, either in substantive content or by the development of analytical techniques, and some of the more energetic government agencies maintain a lively interest in extramural economic research work in Canada and abroad. Nonetheless, economic research outside the public service does not yet make a proper contribution to the development of economic knowledge. The teaching of economics has a long history in Canada, but until World War II the number of Canadian university economists was very small and economic research, though of good quality, was far from comprehensive. The rapid post-war growth of economics faculties in the universities parallels the growth in government but, even so, there are today, in relative terms, approximately fifty times as many academic economists in the United States as in Canada.

Most Canadian academic economists are in their early forties or younger, and the next decade will probably see an important acceleration of the academic contribution to economic knowledge in Canada. Nevertheless, the relatively slow development of economic research in Canadian universities, due to shortage of funds, bears on both the quantity and quality of the future supply of trained economists. While the government is spending scores of millions annually to support research in physics and biology, little financial assistance is given to research in the social sciences. In framing national research policy and selecting the scientific fields to be assisted in future

with public funds, consideration might well be given to the claims of the social sciences, hitherto almost totally neglected. Your Commissioners believe that the effectiveness of economic analysis in the federal government could be substantially improved by programmes to stimulate outside research, having regard to the close interconnections between public and academic economic analysis, and to the high potential of complementary productivity.

At present, departments and agencies employ academic economists as consultants on particular problems and, sometimes, to carry out long-range research projects. Your Commissioners believe that an extension of this satisfactory practice should be encouraged. First, outside economists could be appointed to senior research and policy-planning positions within the government for terms of about two years, particularly in the Departments of Finance, Trade and Commerce, Labour and Agriculture; the Bank of Canada should be encouraged to adopt a similar course. In the United Kingdom, the government has utilized this means to secure different viewpoints and to disseminate more widespread understanding of governmental procedures and problems. Second, outside economists could be appointed members of permanent and *ad hoc* committees. The value would far exceed the modest cost of an outside economist whose field of research interest corresponds to the work of a government committee. Finally, outside economists could be used to a greater extent on international negotiating teams, to the benefit of both the government and the profession.

In the United States, organizations like the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Brookings Institution, the Cowles Commission and the Rand Corporation have demonstrated the exceptional usefulness of private research institutes; their value to the government and their important general contributions to public knowledge are universally recognized. There are no comparable organizations in Canada. The Canadian Tax Foundation does good and important work within a limited sphere of interest; the Economic Research Institute at Queen's University has made an important contribution; and the research work sponsored by the Private Planning Association has been valuable. Without discounting the work of these and other research institutions, or of the universities, consideration should be given to the development of an independent economic research foundation in Canada.

These suggestions are put forward as a means of capitalizing on the complementary productivity of all Canadian economists in the public service and outside. However, an association of this nature should not be unilateral. To make the partnership effective, the universities should appoint government economists to their staffs for varying periods, both to encourage research and to utilize specialized knowledge for teaching graduate students.

3

STATISTICAL SERVICES

MAIN CLASSES OF USERS

The production of statistical information by government and private undertakings has grown enormously in recent years, reflecting greatly increased public demand and growing ability to produce reliable statistical data. Maturing recognition that business decisions, public policies, and the discussion of public issues require soundly-based factual knowledge underlies the demand for more and more statistical information. Many factors have combined to facilitate the satisfaction of this demand. Better business records; increased arithmetical literacy; the development of survey, sample, and other techniques for the collection of reliable information; the invention of machines for processing numerical data; the training of skilled people to collect, edit, process, and analyze statistics, have all enabled the production of statistical data almost to keep up with the expanding demand. There is no sign of any abatement in the demand for data; on the contrary, the requirements are for more comprehensive coverage, new statistical matrices, and greater detail.

In Canada, statistics are put to four types of use which, while not unrelated, have important differences relevant to the main points examined by your Commissioners; these are:

- Statistical information essential to government for effective administration and formulation of public policy.
- Statistical information to provide business, labour and other bodies with the basis for better-informed decisions.

- Statistical information as a vital element in research by social scientists in the universities and elsewhere.
- Statistical information as a background for the democratic process of discussing and debating important public issues.

Government

Without adequate statistical data, government today could no more carry on its affairs efficiently than could a modern business without accounts. The formulation of general policy and the administration of resources, education, immigration, law and order, public health, social security, housing, taxation, debt management, and other matters of national or regional importance, all require a continuing flow of reliable and up-to-date statistical data. This calls, in turn, for general quantitative measures such as the national accounts, production and price indices, balance of payments statements, and data relating to particular industries or sectors of the economy. In these days, the papers on the desk of any senior administrator or policy advisor in the public service are likely to contain more numbers than words.

Business, Labour and Other Bodies

Similar needs are felt by the administrators and policy planners of modern business undertakings. To maintain a prosperous enterprise in a complex, interdependent and dynamic economy, it has become necessary to base business decisions on a very broad knowledge of demand, supply and cost conditions. This knowledge must be much wider and more varied than may be acquired by personal observation and experience alone. Much of the information required for managing a business comes, of course, from its own books, but even the most elaborate internal accounts cannot reflect important external data such as the percentage of the market captured; the location, age, sex and economic status of potential customers; industry trends in profits, marketing and labour costs, productivity, and capital investment; trends in long and short-term financing costs; and potential concentrations of raw materials and semi-finished components. Business planners must have this information if plans and objects are to be based on anything more than wishful thinking and guesswork. Statistical data, properly presented, can distil myriad facts into comprehensible summaries that disclose relevant relationships.

Parallel needs for statistical data as a basis for policy planning and operating decisions are felt today by labour unions, professional associations, welfare agencies, boards of education, and the administrative departments and agencies of provincial and municipal governments. Without reliable data on

pay levels, labour costs, employment, hours of work, productivity, industrial activity and consumer price levels, most modern labour negotiations would be sterile indeed. Without comprehensive data on population, employment, wage levels, transportation, production and trade, many municipal bodies, both governmental and private, would find their daily tasks infinitely more difficult. In short, economic and social statistics are an essential nutrient in the regular functioning of our present complex society.

Research

The part played by statistical data in modern economic and social research is evident to anyone who examines the scientific journals and monographs published in the fields of economics, sociology, social psychology, history and political science. The social scientist uses statistical data not only to obtain numerical descriptions of phenomena in which he is interested, but also for testing theoretical propositions and hypotheses. In the past twenty years, the social sciences have been transformed by the development of mathematical and metric techniques. Current development of the electronic computer will cause a further revolution in both the methods and effectiveness of those social sciences that can make analytical use of statistical data.

But advanced techniques and electronic equipment are of little value without data that have the qualities of reliability, continuity, and integration essential to advanced mathematical analysis and computing methods. At the present time, social scientists spend a great deal of effort trying to fill gaps in older statistics or to adapt modern statistics to the requirements of their analyses. A clamour for more and better statistics from government sources continues at a high pitch.

The Public

The significance of statistical information in public discussion of economic and social questions is obvious from even the most cursory survey of the popular press and other mass media of communication. Contemporary discussion of these matters by popular writers, commentators and political leaders is regarded as incomplete without a scattering of statistics. Whatever may be thought of the use made of statistical data in such discussions—and professional social scientists and statisticians must at times have serious doubts about the value of this contribution to public enlightenment—factual numerical information plays an important role in public debate.

This particular use of statistics is a matter of special interest to your Commissioners. The statistical work of the federal government is important not only to the professional user but to the general public, who are influenced by

this information when arriving at judgments essential to the democratic process. The integrity of official statistics, which has important implications in the organization of government statistical services, is discussed later in this report.

ORGANIZATION CONCEPTS

The Need for Integration

The uses of statistics delineated above require something more than "reliable data" in the simple sense of the term. The individual statistical series is of limited interest in itself; almost invariably, the user of statistical data will want to employ different statistical series jointly. "Reliable" individual series of data may be produced in a number of different ways, for different definitions and concepts may be chosen, with equal validity, as the primary foundation. Recognition of the possible joint use of statistics means, therefore, that all the series must be designed from the beginning to facilitate joint use. Data on such matters as production, trade, prices, and incomes are not separate and distinct but closely related, and must be comparable if analytical penetration is to be achieved. Sociological statistics have the same requirements. Data on police arrests must be comparable with data on courts, jails, and penitentaries; important composite statistics such as the national accounts, input-output tables, and various production and price indexes could not be constructed at all if the original series on which they are based were not, or could not be made comparable. The production of the most useful statistics, therefore, requires not only expert work on each individual series, but that the whole output should be conceived as an integrated statistical system.

An integrated statistical system raises the question of the desirable degree of centralization for Canada, which has been debated by professional statisticians for many years, without the emergence of a consensus. Wholesale integration involves a danger that the system may harden into a set form which is insensitive to developments in theory and analytical techniques. On balance, however, an integrated statistical system is so much more useful than a mere collection of disparate data series that the risk of ossification must be taken. The danger would be appreciably lessened by appointing more subject-specialists to the staff of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. In the view of your Commissioners, the production of statistics by the federal government should be organized in such a way as to promote a high degree of systematic integration.

The points most frequently advanced by those supporting the principle of decentralization of statistical services are:

- To the extent that statistics are used internally—for the formation of departmental policy and for departmental administration—the data will be more suitable if collected and processed by the using department.
- A centralized statistical agency cannot have as intimate an appreciation of the statistical requirements of departments.
- In statistical collection, the co-operation of respondents is more easily secured by a department with administrative responsibilities in the same area than by an agency concerned only with statistical collection.
- The task of statistical collection and processing in an advanced economy is so great that a centralized statistical agency would be too large to be well managed. It would have to be fragmented into subject-matter divisions for internal administrative reasons, reproducing within the centralized statistical agency the existing departmental divisions.

It is also contended that many statistical data are collected, not as an independent operation, but as a by-product of the ordinary administrative activities of departments. The tax returns submitted to the Department of National Revenue yield a large number of series on the productive, financial, and commercial activities of business corporations. Even if it were desirable, the collection of data could not be separated, in this and similar cases, from the administrative functions of a department.

Those who support the principle of centralization in the organization of statistical services stress the following points:

- The important requisite of statistical integration can best be met by an agency primarily concerned with statistics and the over-all quality of the statistical system. Where statistics are collected departmentally, integration requires a degree of interdepartmental co-ordination and co-operation that is difficult to obtain.
- A centralized agency can achieve substantial economies in operation, such as in tabulations, computations, printing, and distribution services.
- A centralized agency can operate a chain of regional offices for follow-up work and for conducting field surveys.
- There is more efficient use of scarce skilled manpower, and of expensive mechanical and electronic equipment.

- Within a centralized agency there can be a lateral movement of professional staff, whose knowledge and skill in one statistical area can make a critical contribution in others where difficulties may have developed. Related benefits arise from close association and mutual education of professional statisticians employed and housed in one centralized agency.

It is generally agreed that statistical resources are likely always to be insufficient to meet all demands and must, in effect, be rationed in a balanced fashion. The factors on which judgment must be based to achieve a balanced development are intangible in any one statistical field, and comparisons between statistical fields may be even more nebulous. Comparisons must be made somehow, however, and decisions reached. A necessary prerequisite is a full knowledge of the problems of creating statistical series, their accuracy, and their role in economic and social decisions. Centralization does not provide an easy solution, but a centralized agency can make comparative evaluations more effectively and can arrive at decisions with more despatch than a number of independent statistical authorities.

There is also the important matter of objectivity, which implies that statistics must be accurate, and that they should be released promptly. Statistics are a powerful instrument of exposition and argument, and it is imperative that this kind of information should provide an unquestionably objective basis for public discussion. The integrity of the statistical system of the Government of Canada must be above suspicion.

To suggest that a centralized and specialized statistical agency is likely to meet this vital requisite better than decentralized units is not to cast doubt upon the integrity or efficiency of the latter. It must be recognized, however, that in decentralized operations statistical considerations are in danger of being pushed aside by urgent needs for day-to-day action. This conflict of interest may result in delaying, or failing to produce at all, statistical series of value to the public but of little immediate or apparent consequence to the department. The occasional charge of bias against official statistics, and the heat generated thereby, makes it clear that the public demands statistical facts detached as fully as possible from political and other special interests, and produce without questionable alterations in the timing of publication.

Conclusions

It is impossible to evaluate the arguments for and against centralization of statistical services on any basis that is not, fundamentally, a matter of subjective judgment. Your Commissioners are of opinion that centralization

is desirable. This conclusion is influenced by Canadian experience with the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Over the years the Bureau has won an enviable reputation, and the Canadian statistical system, of which the Bureau is the centrepiece, is highly regarded both in Canada and abroad. One need not seek to establish how much of this achievement is due to the centralization on which it is built; how much is due to the Bureau's statutory independence of other departments; or how much may be ascribed to the Bureau's exceptional good fortune in the choice of its first chief officer and his successors. The fact is that it has been a success.

Of course, it is neither necessary nor desirable to have a completely centralized statistical system; departments must be free to collect and process certain kinds of statistics themselves. The governing principle is that statistical activities of departments should be confined to experimental work on a relatively small scale. Whenever a statistical procedure advances to the point where it can be systematized, the Bureau should take over. All statistical activities that employ substantial numbers of statistical personnel or make large expenditures on tabulating and computing equipment and other facilities should either be the responsibility of the Bureau or, if undertaken by a department, subject to review by the Dominion Statistician.

THE DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Early Statistical Activities

Before 1918, the existing body of government statistics was the result of the unco-ordinated and sometimes haphazard work of the several departments. The growth of the country in the years after 1900 and the increasing complexity of its economic problems drew attention to the inadequacies of the statistical system. This culminated in the appointment, in 1912, of a Commission of six "to examine and report on the official statistics of Canada". The Order in Council appointing the Commission made reference to the dearth of statistics of production and distribution, the duplication of effort between departments, and the absence of co-ordination and collaboration. The Commission was directed to develop a plan for "a comprehensive system of general statistics adequate to the interests of the country and in keeping with the demands of the time". The following passages are quoted from the report of the Commission:

> Though many of the statistical reports issued by various departments and branches are of undoubted excellence and value, there is apparent in the body of Canadian statistics, considered as a whole, a lack of coherence and common purpose. This is traceable to imperfect appreciation in the past of the fact that the statistics of the country, whether the product of one agency

or several agencies, should constitute a single harmonious system, with all divisions in due correlation.

On the contrary each department or branch, charged either directly or indirectly with statistical investigation, has concerned itself primarily with the immediate purpose only in view. This is, from the usual standpoint, quite as it should be; a department is not to be expected to regard points of view beyond the scope of the administration assigned to it. Nevertheless, the effect statistically has been to inculcate routine and the neglect of opportunities for furnishing wider information and service.

As a result of this enquiry, the office of Dominion Statistician was created in 1915 and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics established in 1918. Since then, the Canadian statistical system has undergone very extensive development.

Terms of Reference

The *Statistics Act,* clearly envisaging a centralized and fully co-ordinated statistical system, enacts that:

3. There shall be a Bureau under the Minister, to be called the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, the duties of which are

   (a) to collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish statistical information relative to the commercial, industrial, financial, social, economic and general activities and condition of the people;

   (b) to collaborate with all other departments of the government in the collection, compilation and publication of statistical records of administration according to any regulations;

   (c) to take the census of Canada as provided in this Act; and

   (d) generally to organize a scheme of co-ordinated social and economic statistics pertaining to the whole of Canada and to each of the provinces thereof.

The degree of centralization and co-ordination envisaged by the Act has not been achieved in practice. The reason is that nothing on the statute books, either in the *Statistics Act* or elsewhere, actually limits statistical activities in other departments or agencies, or subjects them to any form of control. Lack of precision and harmony, and even direct incompatibility with the *Statistics Act,* characterizes the statutory powers of the departments on statistical matters. The statutes establishing the Departments of Fisheries and Transport do not mention statistics, although both departments do a substantial amount of statistical collection that is not a mere by-product of administration. On the other hand, the *Department of Labour Act* is specific:

4. With a view to the dissemination of accurate statistical and other information relating to the conditions of labour, the Minister shall collect, digest and publish in suitable form statistical and other information relating to the conditions of labour, shall institute and conduct inquiries into important industrial questions upon which adequate information may not at present be available, and issue at least once in every month a publication to be known as the Labour Gazette which shall contain information regarding conditions of the labour market and kindred subjects, and shall be distributed or procurable in accordance with the terms and conditions in that behalf described by the Minister.

The *Department of Mines and Technical Surveys Act* provides that:

> 6. the Minister shall (a) collect and publish full statistics on the mineral production and of the mining and metallurgical industries of Canada, and such data regarding the economic minerals of Canada as related to the processes and activities with their utilization, and collect and preserve all available records of mines and mining works in Canada;

The *Statistics Act* simultaneously provides for the collection of data on general employment and wages, and also on the production of mines. The quotations are inserted to illustrate the variety of enactments, which leads to duplication of administrative effort, to disagreements within the public service, and to spasms of irritation by those required to provide data. Appropriate action to clarify fields of responsibility would be in the common interest.

The basic weakness lies in the *Statistics Act,* which requires the Dominion Statistician "to collaborate with all other departments" on statistical matters and "to advise in all matters pertaining to statistical policy" but does not require the other departments to collaborate with the Dominion Statistician. The Act further requires the Dominion Bureau of Statistics "to organize a scheme of co-ordinated social and economic statistics . . . . ." and enjoins the Dominion Statistician "to organize and maintain a scheme of co-operation in the collection, classification and publication of statistics as between the several departments of government", but provides no machinery or authority to these ends, on the apparent assumption that the mere existence of a central statistical agency is sufficient to ensure co-ordination.

In 1957, in an effort to promote better co-ordination, the Treasury Board advised departments that:

> . . . The Board hopes . . . that departments and agencies will take the initiative in discussing their problems with the Bureau and no new statistical operations will be undertaken without this consultation . . . It is the intention of the Board that any staff requirements arising out of statistical functions will be scrutinized during the meetings of Establishment Review Committes to ensure that this procedure has been carried out.

There is little evidence that this resolve has either influenced government departments or produced any improvement. The danger remains, therefore, that unco-ordinated and redundant operations may be initiated by departments without the knowledge of the Dominion Statistician, and may quickly become inextricable from other departmental activities.

Co-ordination

In the United Kingdom and the United States, government statistical services are decentralized. As a result, there has been more explicit attention to the problem of co-ordination in those countries than in Canada, and co-ordinating machinery has been developed to a high degree.

In the United States, the need for an agency to co-ordinate the extensive

statistical operations of the government led to the creation of a Central Statistical Board in 1933. The authority of the Board was greatly increased in 1939, when it was incorporated into the Bureau of the Budget in the Executive Office of the President. This body, now called the Office of Statistical Standards, is placed at the highest executive level in government organization and has extensive powers over all statistical work throughout the agencies of the United States government. With only a few specified exceptions, all information requests that are to be sent to ten or more respondents must be approved by this Office, which thus has full control over statistics collection. The Office is responsible for the development and application of standard definitions, classifications, and procedures to be used by all statistical agencies, thereby enabling it to promote the development of an integrated statistical system. The Office plays an important part in the Budget Bureau's examination of the budget estimates of the statistical agencies. Since 1949 the Office has prepared a consolidated budget of statistical activities, which is used to review the functions of the statistical system as a whole; thus, the statistical activities of a particular department are evaluated by the Bureau of the Budget, not so much as a departmental function but as a part of the government statistical service.

In the United Kingdom, co-ordination is assigned to the Central Statistical Office, established in 1941 within the Cabinet Office. This Office has certain statistical operational duties of its own, but it also has power, directly and through the Treasury, over all statistical operations of the United Kingdom government. It exercises its authority to achieve standardization, co-ordination and integration of statistics, and to promote statistical development. The Director of the Central Statistical Office has authority over the appointment, promotion, and duties of statisticians throughout the government service.

The important conclusion to be drawn from these developments in the United States and the United Kingdom is that, while opinions may differ about the proper way to organize statistical operations, there is widespread agreement that the elements of a modern statistical system should be closely co-ordinated. The centralized Canadian statistical system is, paradoxically, less able to achieve co-ordination than some decentralized systems. Centralization has evidently led to a failure to appreciate the importance of co-ordinating the small but important statistical operations outside the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, and the necessary machinery has not been created to give effect to the policy enunciated in the legislation. One result has been to orient the Bureau towards concentration on work for the public, to the detriment of departmental requirements for management information. These problems will not be overcome without a strong effort to reorganize the government's statis-

tical activities, involving changes in the status and powers of both the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and the Dominion Statistician.

Current Defects

The status of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics is ambiguous. Independent of any department by statute, but under the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in practice the Bureau is usually regarded as part of the Department of Trade and Commerce. The Dominion Statistician does not have the status of a deputy minister, and this, together with the Civil Service Commission's rather rigid and questionable distinction between those who participate in policy-making and those who do not, places the whole salary structure of the Bureau a notch (or more) lower than that of other departments. The evidence is that officers of the Bureau are restricted to levels of remuneration incompatible with their skill, training and responsibility, and clearly not in accordance with the current competitive market.

The significant point about the status of the Dominion Statistician is that it is a function of government statistical services to provide factual material objectively. A fundamental requirement is that the statistical services should operate with unimpeachable integrity. The status of the Dominion Statistician must be appropriate to his functions, conferring upon him the absolute freedom to refuse requests that might impair the objectivity of statistical operations. It goes without saying that the principle of unimpeachable objectivity applies with equally imperative force to the statistical operations of other government departments.

The several divisions of the Bureau are not adequately staffed with professional statisticians, and the avoidance of any overt failure of the statistical system is largely due to skill in making the best use of those available. It is hard to resist the conclusion that good luck has been as important as good management in preventing serious failures in recent years; typically, an entire statistical process is under the guidance of only one or two professionals, with no juniors or understudies capable of being trained to senior posts or able to keep the process going in an emergency.

The compilation of the statistics of Canada's balance of international payments is a good example. The compilation of this very important set of statistics involves a high degree of skill and knowledge which is specific to this particular area. The process cannot be reduced to routine and it is not possible for a statistician working in another area quickly to master the complexities. At present these statistics are of high quality and are produced with reasonable speed. The resulting impression is one of stability,

but the organization is actually on a tenuous foundation. If one particular person in the National Accounts Division of the Bureau should die, fall seriously ill, or suddenly resign, the balance of payments statistics would be delayed and the quality seriously impaired for some months. If two people in this Division were to leave simultaneously the process might even have to be suspended temporarily, and it might be years before the former quality was restored. This condition, present also in other divisions, is not satisfactory; the danger of serious interruptions of important statistical processes is too great.

Beyond the current programmes of the Bureau, statistical development throughout the public service requires the attention of professional staffs. With a shortage of professional statisticians, the Bureau has been unable, in recent years, either to undertake or to assist in important development work, and Canada is now significantly behind a number of other countries in some of the newer statistical areas. Examples are the development of comprehensive statistical matrices, such as input-output tables and financial transactions accounts, which have proved most useful in the development of general economic and financial analysis and policy. In other countries, statistics have advanced to the point where senior government officials can make good use of them in advising on economic policy. In Canada, the inadequacy of the skilled resources available to the government has generally retarded statistical development.

One argument commonly advanced against centralization is that statisticians of a centralized agency are not in sufficiently close touch with the work of the departments using the statistics. This difficulty can be overcome only by providing, within the Bureau, a number of subject-specialists sufficient to study and understand the research, policy and administrative problems of the various users. In addition, the Bureau should be adequately staffed to provide specialist technical advice to departments and agencies grappling with complex statistical problems. The professional statistical staff will have to be expanded to fill these needs.

RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC

Part of the primary statistical information reaching the Dominion Bureau of Statistics is collected by departments in the ordinary course of administrative operations. Much of the larger part, however, is collected directly, bringing the Bureau into immediate contact with the general public. Departments and agencies use approximately 4,000 different forms for completion by the public, which are referred to as external forms. Almost 1,000 are used

solely for the collection of statistics, and about 800 of these originate in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Although eighty per cent of all external forms go to the Unemployment Insurance Commission, the Department of National Revenue and the Post Office statistical forms attract the largest number of complaints, comments, and suggestions.

Undoubtedly the public distinguishes between returns required for regulatory purposes and requests for statistical information, viewing the latter as a mere nuisance of dubious utility. Regulatory forms are accepted philosophically, and some administrative forms relate to benefits to the respondent. In the statistical field, therefore, the creation of good respondent relations requires a conscious and continuing effort. The *Statistics Act* gives the Bureau powers of cœrcion, but these have been sparingly used. To secure prompt and accurate information, the co-operation of respondents is essential, and the Bureau cannot afford measures that are too authoritarian.

The Bureau has accordingly been concerned with the question of relations with respondents for many years, and has developed useful links with several sectors of the public. Respondent relations have benefited substantially from the care exercised in the design of forms, schedules and publications, and from prompt attention to requests for statistical data from the public. The Bureau is aware of the need to develop its interrelated respondent and public relations functions; in the latter, staffing procedures must be kept extremely flexible, since there are important periodic variations in the workload.

There are a number of problems inherent in good respondent relations. First, many respondents are not users of the resultant statistics, and many others are unaware of the use to be made of the information requested. Small firms tend to ignore the utility of public statistics in making business decisions, and therefore often do not give serious attention to the completion of forms. In larger organizations, returns are generally completed with care because the resulting data are of use in marketing or other operations.

Second, the required information may not be available in the form requested. A good example is the annual census of manufacturers, which comprises a large series of schedules to be completed annually for the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. These returns are primarily concerned with analyses of material costs, class and cost of labour, consumption of electricity and other fuels, and the value of shipments. A central difficulty for respondents is the conversion of accounting information into statistical data. Most of the schedules are completed in accounting departments, and the difficulties of the task are aggravated by the incompatibility of accounting systems with the requirements of this statistical return. Since it is often impossible to

obtain some of the data from regular accounting records, the accountant is left with a choice between maintaining special records and making guesses. Neither of these solutions is particularly satisfactory, but the Bureau should indicate when and where sober estimates would be regarded as acceptable returns.

Third, some respondents have an exaggerated impression of the extent of duplication in requests from the Bureau, other federal departments and agencies, and provincial governments. This problem is of particular significance in transportation, where some eighteen departments and agencies are interested in various aspects of the carriage of goods and people, while labour and payroll statistics are collected by seven departments and agencies.

In the report *Paperwork and Systems Management,* your Commissioners commented upon inadequate standards of forms design, which has strong influences on respondent relations. Admittedly, many schedules are very complex and represent a challenge to the forms designer. Regrettably, few equal the high standard of the T2—Corporation Income Tax Return—used by the Taxation Division of the Department of National Revenue.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics employs several techniques in the attempt to mitigate these problems—personal contact, displays and speakers at conventions, pamphlet stuffers in questionnaire envelopes, publicity for the facilities of the Bureau and improved design of forms and schedules—and urges industrial and financial economists and those engaged in market research to maintain closer contact with accountants for the purpose of promoting better response to statistical requests. In the past, however, these activities have not been envisaged by anyone as a major function of the Bureau. Your Commissioners believe that greater emphasis should be laid on the development of better respondent relations, and a reassessment of the staff resources devoted to this activity is overdue. The aim should be the establishment of a well balanced respondent-relations programme, supplementing the personal liaison and information activities now carried on by the Bureau. As the Bureau moves to meet the growing demand for statistics, the load placed upon respondents grows; the Bureau should therefore regard the maintenance of excellent respondent-relations as an integral part of its main task.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is a matter of public concern to maintain the independence and integrity of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Like the Dominion Statistician, a few public officers—the Comptroller of the Treasury is an example—are, by law, personally answerable for the application of certain enactments of

Parliament. Each is under a minister but need not accept responsibility for ministerial decisions, the aim being to ensure that certain activities are not subject to the pressures inherent in public administration.

The Dominion Statistician holds office "during pleasure" and may be removed at any time. The Comptroller of the Treasury, under the authority of later legislation, holds his appointment "during good behaviour" and may be removed only for incapacity, inability or failure to perform his duties properly, or for other cause. Your Commissioners are of the opinion that it would promote public confidence in government statistics if the Dominion Statistician held office under the conditions applicable to the Comptroller of the Treasury.

We therefore recommend that: The Dominion Statistician hold office during good behaviour and be removable only for cause.

To permit the co-ordination of statistical activity, positive action is required to bring the operations of other departments and agencies under review by the Dominion Statistician. In view of the present statutory responsibilities for statistical work, it may not be appropriate to confer direct powers of intervention on the Dominion Statistician. Your Commissioners believe that the situation can be met by providing for periodic examination by the Dominion Statistician of all statistical work conducted in other departments and agencies.

We therefore recommend that: The Dominion Statistician be required to audit the statistical programmes of all departments and agencies (other than large proprietary corporations) and to report annually to Parliament on the state of government statistical services.

Your Commissioners believe that every department should be free to engage in statistical work for its own purposes, but that the conduct of programmes calling for large expenditures on staff or equipment should be entrusted to the Bureau. A critical review is now required of certain major programmes, and advice should be sought not only from government sources but also from the principal users of the statistics.

We therefore recommend that: The Treasury Board review statistical activities in the fields of health, labour and transport with a view to determining the

appropriate allocation thereof between the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and other departments and agencies.

In other reports, your Commissioners have referred to the need for better statistical information in areas of management and policy formulation; manpower and scientific statistics are two examples.

We therefore recommend that: The Treasury Board rely upon the Dominion Statistician for assistance in securing statistical data needed for management and policy decisions, and as the principal source of advice on all statistical programmes and the employment of statisticians within the public service.

Reference has been made to current staffing problems within the Bureau, largely related to scales of remuneration, which result in serious shortages of professional manpower.

We therefore recommend that: The remuneration of the professional and auxiliary staff of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics be reviewed for compatibility with that of comparable personnel elsewhere in the public service.

In the view of your Commissioners, the convenience of the public, as well as the quality of statistical data, can be improved by a professionally competent screening of all requests for statistical information emanating from any department or agency of government.

We therefore recommend that: All departments and agencies requesting statistical information from more than ten respondents be required to provide the Dominion Statistician with copies of the request and all accompanying forms, schedules and questionnaires.

Your Commissioners received, during the course of their inquiry, the interested co-operation of scores of organizations representing segments of the public. Positive benefits would accrue from the establishment of machinery whereby public reactions to information requests can be communicated to the government on a continuing basis.

We therefore recommend that: An advisory council be formed, comprising representatives of the principal users of statistics and other public bodies, to meet periodically with the Dominion Statistician to discuss statistical programmes and the problems of respondents, and to report annually to the responsible minister.

13 PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES

SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR GOVERNMENT

REPORT 13: PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES

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A. F. Mercier, *Le Soleil*, Quebec City
Bryan Vaughan, *Vickers & Benson Limited*, Toronto

A number of briefs and submissions bearing on this subject were considered and these are duly recorded in the final volume of your Commissioners' reports.

Your Commissioners, in acknowledging the assistance and advice received, dissociate all those named above from any of the findings and conclusions contained in this report; for these, your Commissioners assume full responsibility.

1

INTRODUCTION

Information activities in the public service range from the reporting of policies, events and discoveries to the promotion of ideas and images. Every department and agency engages in some of these activities, whether or not they are formally recognized in the organization structure, and in a literal sense the information function is carried on at all levels from the minister and deputy minister to the switchboard operator. The nature of the task and the weight attached to it vary according to the purposes of the department or agency, and in each case some techniques and media of communication are more suitable than others.

In its broadest sense, the provision of information to the public is an integral part of the day-to-day working relations between all levels of the federal government and the Canadian public. The development of special machinery within the government to prepare and disseminate information was gradual, and generally occurred in recent years, although shortly after the Department of Mines was established in 1907 an Editorial and Information Division began to edit and publicize the scientific and other official reports of the Department. Three years later the Department of Agriculture, which had been issuing bulletins for farmers since 1887, created a Publications Branch. A decade later, the new Department of National Health established a Publicity and Statistics Division to enlighten the public on such matters as maternal and child welfare, and the dangers, incidence and treatment of various diseases.

In the ensuing years, a number of circumstances have combined to influence more systematic treatment of the information function. First, the growing

range and complexity of government operations have accentuated public demands for information about government policies and programmes. Second, the increasing involvement of government in the economic life of the country has included a growing emphasis on promoting improved methods in the development and utilization of Canadian resources. Third, an increasing sense of national sovereignty and at the same time of interdependence in world affairs has created a growing concern with the projection abroad of Canadian viewpoints and aspirations. Fourth, the development of mass communications, especially radio, film and television, created a need for new kinds of specialists. Finally, the evolution of public relations techniques in industry has suggested, rightly or wrongly, the adaptation of these techniques to government purposes.

As in so many other matters, World War II had a catalytic effect on the development of specialized information services in the government. The machinery then established was designed for wartime needs—to explain and enlist public support for the war effort. To a degree, it was a propaganda effort with a special department headed by a minister assigned the task, and was dismantled at the end of hostilities. But the wartime experience left a lasting impression on political leaders and administrators and during the next few years most departments and agencies which had not already established information services did so.

However, the specialized services still account for only a part—and probably the lesser part—of the information activities of the government. Because the information function exists at every point of contact between the machinery of government and the public, it is bound to remain diffuse and unspecialized, with dimensions not susceptible of statistical measurement.

In the following chapters, the public information services of the government are examined in the broadest sense of the term, first to identify the principal objectives at which those services aim and then to assess the ways in which public information services are organized and conducted throughout the government.

2

INFORMING THE CANADIAN PUBLIC

The information tasks of government fall into four broad categories. Three of these relate to the information services of the government in Canada and are dealt with in this chapter. The fourth, involving services abroad, will be dealt with in the succeeding chapter. An understanding of these tasks is essential to any examination of the organization throughout government of the information function, and of the manner in which it is discharged.

SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

The dissemination of information as a service to the Canadian public is either the sole or principal reason for the existence of some departments and agencies and is an explicit or essential corollary to the operations of others. The purpose may be to develop and propagate a body of knowledge of benefit to the public at large, or to promote efficiency, economy or market opportunities in a particular industry.

One of the most striking examples is the Dominion Bureau of Statistics which has a statutory obligation to publish. The Bureau may, in fact, be regarded in its entirety as a specialized information service. Proper distribution and service to users are not merely routine activities incidental to the preparation of statistics; they are essential to the effective fulfilment of the purposes of the organization. The same may be said of the Meteorological Service of the Department of Transport, whose weather reports are undoubtedly the most widely disseminated of all government information—and the most consistently and widely read.

The extension of knowledge is, of course, the purpose of all scientific research in government. Even where the objective is to facilitate or improve government operations, civil or defence, results are likely to be of wider interest. A project undertaken for defence purposes, for example, may fail in its objective but, nevertheless, establish a scientific principle or engineering technique that can be applied to improve a manufacturing process serving civilian needs. In the application of knowledge, two and two often add up to more than four and, what may appear to be unrelated or insignificant facts may provide the missing links in a development of benefit to the country. It is therefore essential that within reasonable limitations of security there be a free flow of the results of research both to other units of government and to the public at large. There may also be justification for the dissemination of research information that the federal government itself has not produced or sponsored, if this information is not otherwise readily available to potential beneficiaries in Canada.

The need to publish scientific findings is reinforced by the importance attached to publication by scientists themselves. In order to recruit research workers, the government must provide an attractive working milieu, which normally provides opportunities for developing professional recognition by the publication of scientific and technical papers. But such papers may be intelligible only to other scientists; therefore it may often serve a national purpose to have these supplemented by interpretative publication in terms the layman can understand.

These considerations apply generally to all government research, and are well illustrated in the National Research Council, which undertakes or sponsors pure and applied scientific research over a wide field. The principal work of its Information Branch is to act, on a national basis, as a clearing house for all types of scientific and technical information. The Branch consists of a library, a Technical Information Service and a Public Relations Office, with liaison offices in London, England, and Washington, D.C. The library serves as a national science library, accessible to all research workers, and working contacts are maintained and information exchanged with similar libraries around the world. The Technical Information Service studies Canadian and foreign scientific publications, both official and unofficial, adapting and editing whatever may be needed for publication in Canada, and maintains a directory of all Canadian undertakings making use of scientific and technical research information. Contact with the non-technical press is maintained through the Public Relations Office, which is responsible for publicizing the work of the Council in lay terms, facilitating access to people and information by newsmen and specialist writers, and arranging for public, radio and tele-

vision appearances by research workers and other members of the organization.

Because much of the scientific work of the Defence Research Board is governed by security restrictions, its directorate of Scientific Information Service is designed to deal with classified material. However, digests are issued monthly of unclassified accessions to the document collection of the Board, and these are available to other departments and agencies. The Directorate collaborates with a Public Relations Officer, who deals with the press and other non-technical external contacts.

All departments concerned with the development and conservation of resources engage in extensive scientific programmes which, to be of value, must be complemented by effective information services. These departments include Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, and Mines and Technical Surveys.

Side by side with scientific research in the resources departments are programmes of consumer education and market promotion which are equally dependent on the dissemination of knowledge and ideas. In the Department of Fisheries, for example, its Information and Consumer Service encourages conservation practices among commercial and sport fishermen; publicizes the need for improved processing and marketing standards; promotes increased consumption of fish and fish products; and seeks to develop in the minds of the public a better understanding of fisheries as a natural resource. Similar aims are pursued by the Information Services of the Department of Agriculture.

A number of other departments undertake programmes designed to promote changes in the business practices and buying habits of the Canadian public or in standards of health and housing. The Information Division of the Department of Labour, for example, spends more than $500,000 a year in advertising and promotion, with its major campaigns being associated with winter works programme and vocational training, in both of which the provinces participate. The Unemployment Insurance Commission is also engaged in promotional activities supporting the winter works programme.

The Department of National Health and Welfare, among other things, co-operates with provincial authorities to protect and improve public health. The propagation of knowledge and sound practice to promote health and hygiene is the responsibility of the Health Services Directorate, and it is this which receives most attention and effort from the Information Services Division of the Department.

The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation is, by statute, responsible for the promotion of good housing design and construction, and for making

available educational material with respect to all aspect of housing in Canada, including the problems of city growth and renewal. The National Gallery promotes interest in art throughout Canada and in Canadian art abroad.

Thus, in many departments and agencies the provision of information as a service to the public is a primary or statutory responsibility. The purposes are widely assorted but the information activities have several characteristics in common. First, the information task is, in whole or in part, integral to a principal function of the department and may not be treated as an incidental activity. Second, there is no automatic standard by which to determine the quantity of information which should be distributed. Effective control is therefore imperative in order to maintain a proper balance of effort both within the organization and throughout the government.

ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT

In certain situations, operations of government can be assisted and their value enhanced when public co-operation is enlisted. In these cases, a properly directed information programme proves to be an invaluable aid to the economy and efficiency of government.

A perennial operational problem is the economical handling of peak loads either at particular times of day or in particular seasons of the year. A typical example is the flood of work imposed on the Taxation Division of the Department of National Revenue by reason of the April 30th deadline for filing income-tax returns. Since 1950 the Division has undertaken annual advertising and publicity campaigns to encourage early filing. The average cost has been between $30,000 and $40,000 a year and the response has been excellent; more economical work planning has been possible and the number of penalties imposed for late filing has been reduced substantially.

The Post Office faces a daily operational peak around five o'clock in the afternoon, and an overload of staggering dimensions before Christmas. The public can ease these burdens by mailing early in the day every day and posting Christmas mail early in December. Moreover, sorting operations at all times are facilitated when zone numbers form part of the address on mail for the larger cities. The Post Office conducts publicity campaigns to encourage the public to adopt these practices, and savings in direct operational expenditure far exceed the cost of advertising and other publicity.

This is not the total extent of Post Office effort in educating the public in the proper use of postal services. Lectures, posters, pamphlets, television filmstrips and radio broadcasts are all used to induce people to package

and address mail properly. Nevertheless, every year as many as 50,000 parcels are so badly addressed or packed as to make delivery or return equally impossible, and up to $60,000 in cash may be retrieved annually from letters which give no clue to the identity or whereabouts of either addressee or sender.

Public co-operation of a different sort must be sought in staffing the public service. Several departments and agencies find it necessary to stimulate recruiting by general publicity about career opportunities, conditions of work, and other special benefits, quite apart from the direct advertising for specific vacancies.

The Department of National Defence is chief among these, because of the reliance on voluntary enlistment for the Armed Forces. In 1960-61, recruiting expenditures of the three Services approximated $1,300,000, excluding the pay and allowances of those engaged in the work; of this amount, $365,000 was paid for advertising, the balance being spent on the preparation and distribution of promotional material. Recruiting is the responsibility of the Manning Directorate in each Service, and advertising for this purpose is controlled by the Tri-Service Recruiting Advertising Committee. Service public relations activities assist indirectly in the promotion of recruiting, but separate budgets and chains of command are maintained for each function.

The Civil Service Commission does most advertising for staff required by departments. Total promotional expenditures in 1960-61, excluding staff time and printing costs, are recorded as $268,000. In addition, a number of organizations regard the stimulation of interest among potential recruits as an important purpose to be served by their information programmes; this is especially true among departments requiring substantial numbers of scientific and technical personnel.

THE PUBLIC RIGHT TO BE INFORMED

Knowledge of government activities is a public right, and indeed a necessity; but the growing size and diversity of government make the satisfaction of this need more and more difficult. The machinery and processes of government are therefore taking increasingly into account the public demand to be informed.

Responsiveness

At the very least, this requires a responsiveness to requests for information and explanations. First and foremost, the needs of Parliament must be satisfied, both accurately and promptly. This is, of course, of overriding concern

to ministers, who look to their departments for the data to meet the need. Every department furnishes material for replies to parliamentary questions and for ministerial statements both in Parliament and on other public occasions. In addition, with few exceptions, departments and agencies are obliged by law to make a formal report to Parliament each year.

Increasingly, the traditional parliamentary concern with the operations of the public service is being supplemented by manifestations of public interest through other channels, and especially through the media of mass communications. At the direct level, the public is ill-disposed to official procrastination in providing desired information. This is especially applicable to information about taxes. So far as the Royal Commission is concerned, there is too much evidence of frustration encountered by Canadian businessmen seeking information on which trading decisions depend. The classification of goods for import duty may determine the profitability of a venture, and inordinate delays in obtaining advance appraisal for duty may be costly to the businessman.

Publicity

The character and extent of the effort required to provide an adequate response to inquiries can be gauged with reasonable accuracy by the nature and volume of the requests themselves. However, when departments take the initiative in publicizing their operations, the proper limits of their information activity become debatable.

The provision of services to the public entails some obligation to make those services known to the public, even where they are free of charge: the money spent to make them available would be a total loss were they not used. This applies to such establishments as the National Gallery and the various museums maintained by the government. In this connection, the National Museum, in sharp contrast to the other branches of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, appears to be little publicized.

Government publicity may also be required for services of a quite different nature which are available, in cash or in kind, to particular sections of the citizenry, often on a contingent basis. For instance, the benefits available to veterans and their dependants are regulated by several statutes of a complex nature, and the Department of Veterans Affairs is under an obligation to give comprehensive publicity.

In parallel with the need to publicize the rights of the citizen and the services that are available to him, the government is under an obligation to give adequate publicity to the restrictions and obligations imposed on the public by law. The judicial principle that ignorance of the law is no defence does not

absolve the government from the duty of making the law reasonably plain to those affected.

Special considerations apply to the publicity activities of deciding tribunals. As a general rule, these tribunals observe the traditional reticence of the judiciary when out of court. But it is the invariable practice of the higher courts to give a reasoned exposition in support of a judgment, a practice that should properly be followed more consistently by administrative tribunals when the matter is one of public interest. Even more imperative is the need for the reasons for a decision, if published at all, to be released at the same time as the decision itself—not as a defensive afterthought consequent to public criticism. Regulatory tribunals should also be under obligation to publicize policy decisions so that those adversely affected may initiate timely action for remedy.

Beyond these special obligations, as departments go on to publicize their activities more generally, on the basis of newsworthiness, they enter an area of activity which is both ill-defined and controversial.

Every department and agency generates news, some more than others, and most try to work closely with the press and broadcasting media to provide timely and usable material in suitable form. Spot news of national interest does not arise every day, but in some government operations there is an almost continuous flow of routine news of interest to particular occupational groups or geographical areas. Government construction and procurement, for instance, have an effect on the national economy and often have a significant impact on the prosperity of a particular neighbourhood. This local importance is reflected in the volume of parliamentary questions and inquiries from the press and public about the letting and progress of contracts.

There is, however, a distinction—not always easy to draw—between releasing news and "telling the Department's story". What must be borne in mind is that all government activity has at least a modicum of political significance. Consequently, the publicizing of a department may be an excursion into the realm of political controversy.

The danger need not be overstated. It is not a matter of the deliberate misuse of the information process to manipulate public opinion for political purposes. Even if this were tried—and there is no evidence that it has been—the attempt would founder on the independence of the news media and the safeguards inherent in the political process itself. But short of this remote threat of crude and probably self-defeating efforts at political manipulation, government publicity may involve less fundamental but more subtle dangers.

There is no fixed line between exposition and argument, between publicity and propaganda. What is news to one man is propaganda to another. A news

release, pamphlet or film about a missile installation, fall-out shelters, the treatment of offenders or the education of Indian children may be only a bare and even dull recital of fact but still seem argumentative and provocative to some of the public. It would be absurd to conclude that publicity should be given to government activities only by the political leaders, but certain other conclusions may be drawn.

First, general government publicity should be strictly factual and as far as possible objective. Apart from the special areas of promotional information, as defined elsewhere in this chapter, the task of information services is to inform rather than to persuade. Moreover, publicity should take the form of source material rather than be aimed directly at the public. Experienced information officers make a preliminary judgment as to newsworthiness and ensure that publicity material is released in clear and coherent form; but the ultimate decision as to what is news and how it should be presented must be left to the media. Elaborate presentations by film, book or feature and human interest stories may be good publicity on the part of private organizations, but cannot always be regarded as legitimate forms of general publicity by the government.

Second, there should be restraint and balance in volume; even when information is objective in character, sheer volume can transform it into propaganda and an excessive and undiscriminating flood of material defeats its purpose. Aggressive efforts to capture public attention constitute, regardless of intent, attempts to win public support. When this occurs, government information services become active participants in the political process.

Third, an important distinction should be drawn between material which genuinely informs and that which is calculated only to impress; the latter has no place in the information activities of government. It is tempting to issue news stories, pictures or films depicting weapons, laboratories and engineering works as marvels of the age—begging the question of their function and worth.

The philosophy of the public relations man promoting the interests of an industry is that everything which brings the company's name to the attention of the public in a not unfavourable context is advantageous. The very fact of being known is important for business reasons and so the job of publicizing may include a continuing effort to secure maximum publicity. Your Commissioners do not subscribe to the view that similar approaches are permissible in government. Keeping the mass media supplied with a flood of so-called news releases is not a function of a department. What is offered for publication should meet the test of being necessary in the execution of programmes of a department. The public is entitled to expect that public duties are compe-

tently performed, and the taxpayers' money should not be spent to impress people with the quality of performance. Thus the objective of being "well and favourably known", so legitimate in competitive business, forms no part of public information policies of departments.

Your Commissioners are satisfied that the current publicity effort in government is honest and well-intentioned. Whether it is entirely proper is doubtful, but to the question "how much is proper?" no clear answer can be given. Official reticence should not be carried to the point of un-responsiveness and indifference to the public's right to be informed. The vagueness of the other limit has already been indicated.

Whatever may be the proper limit to publicity by any individual organization, the examination made of current activities reveals a lack of balance among the departments and, in particular, between the civilian departments and the Department of National Defence.

The only civil departments having information staffs of some magnitude are those charged with providing information as a service to the public. These departments are more active in the dissemination of general publicity than are those without specific promotional functions; but, in general, their publicity activities are also restrained. The Armed Forces, on the other hand, overshadow the civilian organizations in the size of their information services. In May, 1962, these were manned by 67 Service officers, 67 other ranks and 56 civilians. By way of comparison, the Department of Transport had only five information officers although its operations affect the safety and convenience of all modes of transportation in Canada—by rail, in the air or on the water.

In part, the publicity activities of the Armed Forces are an indirect form of stimulus to recruiting although, as noted above, direct recruiting activities are substantial. It is clear that the principal aim of the Services' information programmes is to win public approbation, and "public relations" is consistently used in preference to "information" in describing both their work and staffs employed.

The activities of the three Service directorates of public relations were assessed by a check of output in a two-week period in November and December 1961. It revealed:

- 68 press releases, including 10 "major stories".
- 7 news-feature releases.
- More than 2,500 photographic prints distributed.
- More than 100 radio, television and film assignments completed, ranging from news clips to 15-minute film and television features.

- More than 700 radio tapes and 500 television tapes produced and distributed.

So far as is known, this particular two-week period was in no way exceptional. In your Commissioners' view, this output is disturbing because of its volume and intensity and also for the high proportion of material offered not as source material but as a finished product to be carried by the media.

We therefore recommend that: The government assess the scale and character of the information activities of the Armed Forces, and especially their heavy reliance on public relations techniques.

3

INFORMATION SERVICES ABROAD

Speaking for Canada is a very different task from speaking to Canada. The general canons of honesty and good taste apply to both, but the government's information activities abroad must pursue aims differing from those of its domestic services. This chapter, then, is concerned with the various information programmes directed to audiences abroad by a number of federal departments. In examining the information activities of the Department of External Affairs, however, the organization and direction of overseas services cannot be treated separately from its activities at home, and the latter are therefore included here.

The authority of the government stops at the boundaries of Canada. Beyond that point Canada can promote its interests only by persuasion and, if it is to play its full part in world affairs and enjoy the trading position essential to Canadian prosperity, it must be heard and understood abroad. Moreover, the continuing growth of Canada depends, to a significant extent, on its ability to attract investment capital and people. It is therefore necessary to project a consistent image of Canada to the world, portraying in proper balance its character, purposes, resources and opportunities.

This need has been recognized by the federal government for some years. In 1956, an Interdepartmental Committee on Information Abroad was established "to consider and make recommendations to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs and through him to appropriate departments and agencies on matters concerned with the co-ordination of Canadian information abroad." The membership consisted of representatives of the Departments of

Agriculture, Citizenship and Immigration, External Affairs, Finance, Fisheries, National Defence, Northern Affairs and National Resources, and Trade and Commerce, as well as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board, and the National Gallery. It was assumed that the Committee would meet regularly, perhaps monthly, and provision was made for annual meetings of the interested Deputy Ministers to review membership, terms of reference, policies, principles, priorities, and facilities.

The results have been disappointing. The annual meetings of Deputy Ministers failed to materialize, and the Interdepartmental Committee has met infrequently, sometimes not more than three times in a year. The minutes disclose little discussion of principles or high purposes; instead they have centred on such minutiae as the size of flag to be included in a speakers' kit or the lighting of a special display at an exhibition. Few departmental information directors now attend meetings, sending in their places officers at a level which does not permit speaking authoritatively for their departments. "We should be planning the menu, not peeling the potatoes", was the comment of one information director, and his view is widely shared.

The results of this failure are all too evident abroad. In France, for example, three officers of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, to counteract the lack of knowledge about contemporary Canada, organized a campaign of speaking engagements and film showings throughout the winter of 1961-62, without any assistance from either the External Affairs or Trade and Commerce officials in Paris. Meanwhile, in Western Germany, a Canadian Consul-General was unaware for some time of the existence of a Canadian Immigration Office in his own city. Although a Trade and Commerce officer himself, he learned only from a magazine article of a change in Commercial Counsellors in the Embassy at Bonn. The Consular Officer representing External Affairs in the same city engages in no information work whatsoever, although local mass media include the three largest newspapers and the two largest magazines in Western Germany, as well as the headquarters of a large radio and television network.

Immigration

Except in the United Kingdom, direct canvassing for immigrants is generally prohibited in Europe, but the Department of Citizenship and Immigration has adopted a vigorous indirect approach and has become the most active dispenser of information about Canada throughout Western Europe. Using material prepared by the Information Division of the Department, foreign-service officers of the Immigration Branch make continuous rounds address-

ing any audiences that can be gathered to hear the story of Canada and to see Canadian films. One of them spoke to more than 10,000 people in West Germany during 1960, as well as participating in a number of radio and television programmes. But his travels and engagements often come as a surprise to Canadian officials resident in the cities he visits. His activities are almost a closed book so far as the Embassy in Bonn is concerned, for there is no attempt at co-ordination between the programmes of his department and the information services of the Departments of External Affairs and Trade and Commerce.

Tourism

The Canadian Government Travel Bureau, which is now a division of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, was established in 1934 to encourage tourist travel to Canada, particularly from the United States. Its aim is to provide a means of co-ordinating tourist promotion by provincial governments, municipalities, regional and local travel associations, and the principal transportation companies. Branch offices are maintained in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, while the embassy and every consulate in the United States has a travel desk for the distribution of material supplied by the Bureau. Quite recently, an office was opened in London, England. In Ottawa, rapid handling of inquiries has been achieved by assembly-line process involving prepackaging of material and the use of automatic equipment. During a year, the Bureau receives more than 700,000 inquiries, but the work is so well organized that coupons clipped from advertisements are answered within twenty-four hours of receipt, while letters requiring more particular attention are usually answered within forty-eight hours. Most of the printed material is modestly designed, and the cost of the current thirty-four publications ranges from 1¢ to 21¢, with print-runs from 7,000 to over 1,300,000. Unfortunately, the distribution of these publications suffers from a failure to differentiate between serious and frivolous inquiries. Consideration might well be given to the use of a broadsheet folder in response to coupon inquiries.

The permanent staff of the Bureau numbered ninety-five at the time of this inquiry. Although there is plenty of promising talent, the weight of experience and proven ability is thinly spread at the top. Even some of the key men have little personal knowledge of Canada beyond the regions in which they have lived. This is a grave handicap when dealing with the travelling public and a systematic programme of practical education should be undertaken. The present policy of rotating staff assigned to the branch offices

should also be reviewed; it takes at least two or three years to become acquainted with the sales territory and to establish the necessary contacts.

Excellent working relationships have been established with provincial and other tourist promotion organizations, but it is to be doubted whether the Bureau is appropriately located in the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. This Department is in no sense a promotional agency. The tourist industry, which brought in an estimated $417,000,000 in 1960, (and much more currently) is an important element in Canada's international commerce. Affiliation or merger of the Travel Bureau with a department extensively engaged in promotional activities abroad would have many advantages, including the reduction by one of the number of departments engaged in external information work. It is noted that, in fact, the Travel Bureau originally formed part of the Department of Trade and Commerce.

We therefore recommend that: Responsibility for the administration of the Canadian Government Travel Bureau be transferred from the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources to the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Trade Promotion

The information services of the Department of Trade and Commerce are concentrated in the Trade Publicity Branch, which is part of the Foreign Trade Service. The main objective of this Branch is the promotion of Canadian trade in foreign markets; but it also handles all departmental advertising and the distribution of information about the commercial and economic affairs of the country. Although no attempt is made to compete with other nations on a quantative basis—Australia, for example, spends about four times as much as Canada—direct trade promotion activities and expenditures have increased sharply in recent years, from $216,000 in 1958-59 to over $400,000 in 1961-62.

Emphasis is placed on quality rather than sheer quantity, on skilled writing and imaginative design, with the result that the booklets, folders, posters, counter-cards, and other promotional products achieve consistently high standards. The Foreign Trade Division is responsible for the publication of *Foreign Trade,* a thirty-six page magazine issued twenty-six times a year which is the principal medium for acquainting Canadian businessmen with market opportunities and economic conditions abroad. Annual subscription rates of $2 domestic and $5 foreign have not been changed since 1952. They now bear

no relation to the direct cost of printing and distribution and should be revised.

The number of foreign trade fairs in which the Department participated has risen from nine in 1955 to eighteen in 1961, and thirty are scheduled for 1962. These activities are co-ordinated by the Trade Fairs Abroad Division in accordance with policy laid down by a committee of senior Departmental officers after consultation with Trade Commissioners abroad and trade associations. In September, 1960, the Department organized a general trade mission—the first of a continuing series in which thirty-three are planned by the end of 1962. So far, these missions have been organized on *ad hoc* basis, but a permanent organization is needed if the missions are to be properly briefed and equipped to accomplish their purposes.

International Exhibits

The task of designing, erecting, and dismantling Canadian exhibits at international fairs and exhibitions is the responsibility of the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission, another branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce. In recent years, Canada has annually participated in from twenty to thirty fairs and exhibitions. The annual cost of the Commission has ranged from $700,000 to $1,500,000 in 1961-62 (which includes costs in connection with an all-Canadian trade fair in Accra and Lagos and for participation in the Century 21 Exposition now being held in Seattle). The Commission undertakes work for other departments and agencies as required, and when two or more are concerned, or when the Government of Canada is officially represented, as at Seattle, control rests with the Department of External Affairs. For world fairs and other important international exhibitions, it is usual for a special inter-departmental committee to be established, with membership at the level of assistant deputy minister.

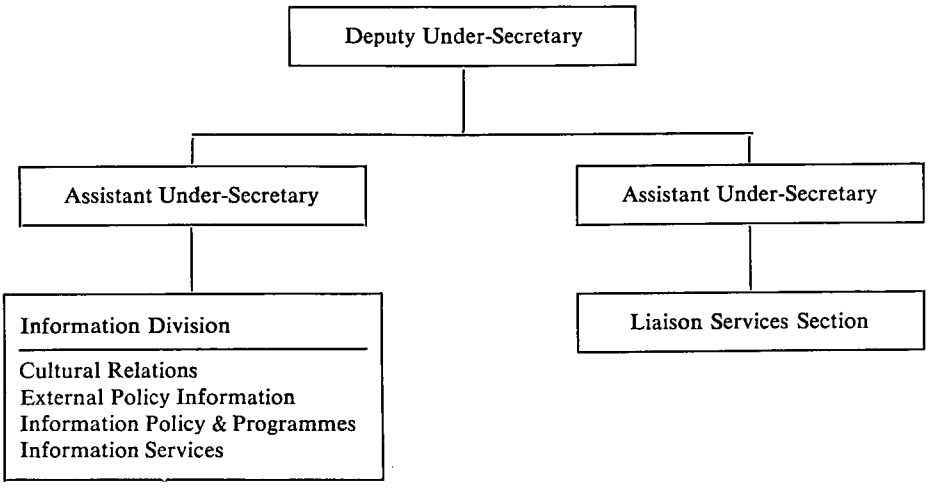
The preparation for participation in an important international exhibition usually extends over a fairly long period, so that continuity of attention is of great importance. Unfortunately, this continuity is nearly always lacking, for the staff of the Information Division of the Department of External Affairs, through which the interdepartmental committee must work, is provided by rotation of foreign service personnel.

ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

In the seventeen years since the Information Division (*see* Chart 1) was established in the Department of External Affairs, there have been fourteen

successive Directors. In one calendar year no fewer than twenty-three staff changes were made. The shortage of information-service experience among the staff can hardly be defended on the ground that greater importance is attached to departmental experience, for at the time of this inquiry officers were being posted to the Division with only one month's experience in the Department. Career foreign-service officers regard service in the Division, if not as a penance, at least as an episode to be endured.

Chart 1—DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION SERVICES—SEPTEMBER 1962



Departmental responsibility for the co-ordination of information abroad, under the indifferent guidance of the standing Interdepartmental Committee, is carried by the Policy and Programmes Section of the Information Division. Much of the work of the Section is concerned with the arrangements for international exhibitions and special events at posts abroad, and there is virtually no effort towards general co-ordination on a continuing basis. Responsibility for the general tenor of programme content of the International Broadcasting Service, which should be at the core of the work of co-ordination, does not lie with the Information Division but with the Liaison Services Section, a separate unit which handles domestic information. The heads of the Information Division and Liaison Services Section, which are not even housed in the same building, do not respond to the same Assistant Under-Secretary.

International Broadcasting Service

Apart from this anomaly in the organization of the Department, the arrangements for the International Broadcasting Service are far from satisfactory. The Service is operated as a separate Division by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with funds provided by a specific parliamentary vote. Programmes in eleven languages are directed by short-wave transmission to selected areas in Europe and Africa and to all countries in Latin America for a total of ninety hours a week. A free transcription service, available to radio stations anywhere in the world, is used by some hundreds of broadcasting organizations in other countries. There is no sure way of estimating the size of the audience reached, but the receipt of some six hundred letters a week on average, many of which originate in countries where freedom is restricted, suggests that it is substantial.

The International Service operates through two 50KW short-wave transmitters at Sackville, N.B., and during the past year the areas covered were reduced so that the facilities could be made available part-time for domestic transmission to the far north. These arrangements must be considered as modest. Operations on the scale of the British Broadcasting Corporation or the *Voice of America* are not to be expected, but the Sackville facilities, which were installed in 1945 and have been little modernized, do not bear comparison with, for instance, the four 100KW short-wave transmitters operated by Ghana. It is not for your Commissioners to make any observation on the desirability or necessity for a Canadian international broadcasting service, but if the service is to be continued consideration should be given to the installation of more adequate transmitters and to means of achieving a closer co-ordination with other information activities abroad.

The programmes broadcast on the International Service are by no means confined to news and propaganda, for it is justifiably held that a projected image of Canada should convey a balanced impression of all aspects of Canadian life and culture. Token recognition of this is indicated by the existence of the Cultural Relations Section in the Information Division of the Department of External Affairs. The Section is responsible for liaison on matters of policy with such federal agencies as the National Gallery, the National Research Council, and the Canada Council, and with a bewildering array of provincial and other cultural and educational organizations from coast to coast, as well as for Canadian relations with UNESCO. Understaffed, the Section is so concerned with these multifarious liaison activities that current efforts to project Canadian cultural achievements to other countries can only be described as pitiful.

Activities at Posts Abroad

At every post abroad an officer is assigned—on a part time basis in most cases—to information duties. Full-time information officers of various ranks are assigned to London, Paris, New York and Washington, the United Nations and Tokyo. Positions in Bonn and New Delhi have been authorized but were vacant at the time of survey. Only three of these officers are professionals by training and experience and, although there have been exceptions, normal rotational posting procedures apply. This may be unavoidable for officers with information duties incidental to their other work, whose postings must conform to the general pattern of the Foreign Service. However, where professionally trained information officers are appointed, they should be left for lengthy periods in the same posts. A diplomatic officer, as he moves from one post to another, can easily pick up the traditional political, social and diplomatic associations, but the newly arrived information officer must establish his own contacts and these are often in circles in which the diplomat does not ordinarily move. The most effective information contacts are based on friendship, service and trust, and cannot be established overnight; being strictly personal, they are seldom heritable. The strict application of the rotation system almost invariably ensures total disruption with each change.

The employment of information officers abroad, however, can only achieve its purpose if they are given the support from Ottawa needed in their work. Full-time information officers in major posts are being frustrated by the lack of a continuous and timely flow of background information concerning Canadian affairs. Equally frustrating are the lack of notice of government moves likely to attract attention abroad, and the dearth of any general directives concerning Canadian aims. In these circumstances, the information officers are left to devise their own interpretations and to cope as best they can, in an impromptu manner, with external reactions to Canadian actions and statements.

A logical source of material for information officers abroad is the External Policy Section of the Information Division. However, the work of this Section is specialized and selective and is addressed primarily to erudite audiences, such as the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the United Nations Association of Canada, and the universities. The principal medium used is the monthly bulletin *External Affairs*. English and French editions are published simultaneously and current circulation totals approximately 41,000.

Most of the printed and mimeographed material distributed by the Department is produced by the Information Services Section. Although this Section includes four positions classified as Editors, it contains no professional

writers—with the result that the necessary journalistic touch is lacking, and most of the mimeographed material commits two cardinal sins of journalistic practice: single-spacing and use of both sides of the paper. As regards content, there is little discrimination in the choice and preparation of material to differing foreign audiences. Valuable advice and assistance might be given by posts abroad but it is rarely sought and seldom volunteered.

Domestic Information

In the domestic information work of the Department, perhaps the most significant aspect is dealt with by Liaison Services, a Section quite separate and distinct from the Information Division. Formed in 1960 by an amalgamation of the former Press Office with the Political Co-ordination Section, its two principal duties are to maintain communications with the Ottawa press corps and to prepare and distribute within the government summaries of classified material received from posts abroad. In its day-to-day relations with newsmen, the unit is restricted to answering inquiries of little importance and distributing copies of speeches and announcements—work that could be done by a trained junior clerk.

The head of Liaison Services has fifteen years experience in External Affairs and is *au courant* with what is going on in the department, but he is permitted to deal with only trivial inquiries. All other are referred to more senior officials who are hard of access. Denied quick and efficient facilities, newsmen rely heavily on informal personal contacts to satisfy their legitimate requirements for comment and interpretative background. The sharp criticisms of the Ottawa press corps deserve attention.

Although the information tasks abroad and at home are of a different order, the attempt to separate the services is illogical. One of the principal purposes of providing information services abroad is to project a national image, but if a different image of Canada is secured by Ottawa correspondents of the foreign media, the latter will prevail.

The information task in Ottawa cannot be discharged adequately by coldly factual releases. There is an urgent need for a focal point where newsmen can get background data and official comment. The departmental officer responsible need not be an experienced pressman, but information experience is clearly desirable and he should have a sympathetic understanding of the problem of newsmen, tempering infinite discretion with ready approachability. Needless to say, he must be well informed on all aspects of policy and operations, sensitive to the nuances of diplomacy, and permitted to use his discretion.

We therefore recommend that: The Information Division and Liaison Services of the Department of External Affairs be re-organized under a senior officer responsible to the Under-Secretary, this officer to serve as chairman of the Interdepartmental Committee on Information Services Abroad with responsibility for its reinvigoration.

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ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION FUNCTION

The information function is organized in a wide variety of forms throughout the government, varying according to the substance of the information, the techniques used, the purposes to be served, and the segment of the public to whom it is directed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Except in a handful of organizations—most notably the Armed Forces—the dissemination of general information about the operations of government is a diffuse activity, using little in the way of special techniques and seldom requiring the services of specialists. The initiative rests largely with the interested public, its representatives and the news-gathering organizations by which it is served. The responses to these initiatives may come from any level of the apparatus of government. Where questions of policy are involved, however, ministers generally are the channel of communication.

For obvious reasons, this is universally true of departmental relations with Parliament, which tend to have first call on the attention of ministers. Within departments, the preparation of material for Parliament is invariably of direct concern to the deputy ministers and it is normal practice for the final preparation of such material to be undertaken in the office of the deputy. Where an information unit is closely identified with this office, it is frequently, but not invariably, made responsible. Material for ministerial statements is assembled in much the same manner.

Relations with News Services

Ministers are also keenly interested in relations with the press and other news services, but direct dealings between press and public servants are not uncommon. Because of the possibility of political repercussions, the task of deciding who should be authorized to deal with the press has posed a persistent problem in government.

In an extreme case, a minister might direct that no information be given to the press by any officials of the department without specific approval from his office, but this would be exceptional. In a department or agency of any size, it is impractical to impose an absolute ban on communications with the mass media, but hazards can be reduced by organized care and attention. One reliable safeguard is to use alert and knowledgeable information officers, because newsmen working against deadlines prefer a known source of prompt and reliable answers to their inquiries. Nevertheless, experience is that information officers should not—by over-zealously trying to provide all the answers to all the questions—monopolize relations with the news media. The most useful service that an information officer can render is often to direct newsmen to knowledgeable administrators.

The reticence of many departments in publicizing their activities through the press inhibits the development of groups of specialists for this purpose. The Department of Public Works construction programmes are frequently of intense local interest across Canada, but it had no organized information service until 1954 and the unit then inaugurated has been kept to modest size. In the Department of Defence Production, which is a comparable source of frequent but low-keyed news, press releases and other necessary information services are under the direct supervision of the Deputy Minister.

When relations with the news services are retained in the office of the deputy minister, it is generally good practice to designate the responsible member of his staff by name, even if the duties are too light to justify a full-time appointment. This is a convenience to the press and a safeguard against uncertainties and confusion within the department. For such an appointment, some knowledge of information techniques is desirable but not imperative; of greater importance is an intimate knowledge of policies and operations.

By the same token, a specialized departmental information organization can serve as a focal point for press inquiries only if it has ready access to all sources of information within the department. A group which has press relations as one of its primary responsibilities is likely to be bypassed if, as in the Department of Transport, it works several levels removed from the

deputy minister and must depend on what filters down for knowledge of departmental policies and plans.

Departments and agencies having field operations that attract local interest face a special problems. Some, like the Department of Defence Production, handle all press relations at headquarters with the result that newspapers and radio stations across the country have to rely on the news services for information respecting contracts awarded to local firms. The Department of Public Works, whose regional units are often directly involved in decisions concerning major projects, has no regional information staffs, but its regional officers handle local press inquiries, using the teletype links to headquarters for guidance and assistance if needed. The Department of Transport, faced with a local interest similar to that experienced by Public Works, has designated a senior officer in each regional office to deal with press inquiries.

Until little more than a year ago, it was the tradition of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to cloak itself in dignified silence; even routine information about crime, prosecutions and mishaps was hard to come by from any source other than the office of the Commissioner. Regulations now permit detachment commanders to release news of local interest, subject only to reasonable safeguards in the interests of security or crime detection. Sub-divisions consult headquarters by teletype when in doubt and report back any news releases, statements and reactions by local news services of more than local interest. These arrangements are working smoothly, with newsmen throughout the country more prone to seek authentication before publishing sensational or controversial stories involving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

In keeping with the importance attached to public relations by the Armed Forces, a significant force of specialists is maintained at the various command headquarters throughout Canada, (and in the Air Division in Europe). These account for over forty per cent of the full-time information and public relations staffs of the Services. It is clearly open to question if a genuine need exists for specialist staffs in the Commands on this scale—33 officers, 35 other ranks and 14 civilians.

Relations with the Public at Large

In its day-to-day dealings with the machinery of government, the public at large generates by far the largest and most diffuse demand for information. Every government employee whose work involves meeting the public or answering its inquiries is, in effect, an information agent of the government. In certain departments—especially National Revenue, the Post Office and the Unemployment Insurance Commission—face-to-face encounters between public servants and the public are so important that departmental management

must provide constant guidance and training to ensure staff courtesy and responsiveness.

The most elementary and pervasive kind of information service to the public is that involved in such universal activities as correspondence and the handling of telephone calls. In the report on *Paperwork and Systems Management*, attention is drawn to the need for improvement in methods of dealing with correspondence. Care must be taken to ensure that responses to the general public are consistent with the essential unity of the public service. An official, replying to a complaint from a source outside the government, is writing or speaking for the government of Canada, not merely for his branch.

This point has assumed greater importance with the growth of government and the proliferation of its branches and offices. Public servants should appreciate that often a real problem of a citizen seeking information or service is to ascertain to whom his inquiry or request should be directed. Mis-directed letters should be *re-directed* rather than rejected with a disclaimer of responsibility. Telephone listings should inform rather than confuse and, as organizations grow in size and complexity, there is increasing need for central reference points which can direct calls to the proper office—a need inadequately recognized by too many departments. The difficulties are compounded outside Ottawa, where local directories often list many separate numbers for departments and agencies, or even for separate branches of single departments. In the report on *Telecommunications*, your Commissioners recommend that the Department of Public Works be charged with the co-ordination of government telephone facilities in each locality and it should provide an inquiry number in each of the larger cities.

There is lively curiosity on the part of the public about major construction or engineering operations such as the St. Lawrence Seaway, and atomic energy projects, or 'local points of interest' such as airports, experimental farms, and, in Ottawa, the Royal Canadian Mint. The task of satisfying this curiosity may—as is usually the case—be incidental to the main functions of the public servants responsible, and may sometimes seem, to a busy administrator, a nuisance and a distraction. But it must be recognized that the public has a valid sense of proprietorship. This is recognized, for example, by the Department of Transport in designating regional administrators as information officers and in framing instructions to assist them.

Diffuse as are these activities directed to the public at large, they are of special concern to ministers. The citizen who is dissatisfied with the answers obtained from public servants often appeals, directly or indirectly, to the

minister concerned. Every minister knows that public attitudes towards his department—and hence towards himself and the government of which he is a member—are influenced by the ability of those in his department to deal promptly, honestly and effectively with public requests and complaints. However, because this type of information activity is pervasive and generally unspecialized, the formation of professional information groups to deal with such work is seldom warranted.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Information activities undertaken as a service to the public or to enlist public co-operation for administrative purposes are essentially promotional. They therefore require a degree of initiative, planning and direction which distinguishes them from the more general task of meeting public needs for general information about government policies and operations. Special care has to be taken to identify the element of the public to whom the information is relevant, and to ensure that the methods employed are those best calculated to reach it and evoke the desired response. In effect, information activity of this sort must be treated, for the purpose of organization and control, as an operational task, for which authority and responsibility has to be clearly assigned within the department or agency, and in which special skills must usually be employed.

There is, of necessity, a close relationship between the task of disseminating information and activities—such as agricultural research, weather observations and statistical surveys—which produce the information. Consequently, the two aspects of the work must be closely associated, under common control. But because the information function normally requires specialized experience and skills which are unlikely to be found among those responsible for the fact-finding activities, it is seldom satisfactory to treat the former as merely incidental to the latter. There are exceptions, such as the Meteorological Service, where the work of dissemination can be treated as a routine matter, requiring no specialized information group. But in most cases, the information function has to be organized separately. However, the manner in which this is done, and the relationships between the information groups and the related research organizations show wide variations throughout the government.

Within the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, where this relationship pervades all operations, the information function is centralized in one information service division, which is responsible for stimulating the distribution and widest possible use of the Bureau's product. The information function of the Bureau

—in a sense, its *raison d'être*—has not received the recognition or support it merits, but this cannot be attributed to any defect of organization, although the exclusion of the Director of Information Service from the Bureau's executive committee seems inconsistent with the importance of his function to the work of the Bureau. A similar centralization of information in a specialist group under the agency head exists in the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and works effectively.

Among the resources departments, the pattern varies. In the Department of Fisheries, the information function is concentrated in the Information and Consumer Service which works with the other services of the Department and with the Fisheries Research Board. Its programmes are designed to promote conservation and quality control in the industry, greater consumption of fish and better public awareness of the importance of Canadian fisheries resources, and to disseminate market information. In the Department of Agriculture, on the other hand, these tasks have taken a more dispersed pattern. A central information division has general responsibility for the gathering and dissemination of information arising from the research, promotional and regulatory programmes of the Department; however, separate information programmes, in which the Information Division takes little or no part, exist in other branches and divisions. The Scientific Information Section of the Research Branch, although primarily intended to meet the need of scientists engaged in agricultural research, plays a much wider role in disseminating information to the general public about the research programme. The Markets Information and Consumer sections of the Production and Marketing Branch also provide data of a specialized nature, while the Economics Division issues both periodic and special material on agricultural economics.

The Information Division handles some of the material of the other sections but exercises no general oversight. As a result, the Division has become engrossed in the technical aspects of producing information, and needs strengthening and a broadened outlook before it will be competent to advise all branches in the planning of information programmes, and to take over the production and distribution. It was also noted that, for lack of close and continuous relations with top management, the Division plays only a minor role in the general information task of publicizing departmental policies and activities.

Fragmentation of the information function also exists in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Owing to the diversity and disparate character of the various programmes of the department, there are virtually no operating contacts binding the four principal branches together and the infor-

mation task is different in each branch. Although the Information Division nominally serves the whole department, about four-fifths of its effort is on behalf of the Immigration Branch, a limited amount of material being produced for the Indian Affairs Branch. The only significant link between the Information Division and the Citizenship Branch involves the supervision of a $40,000 advertising programme for the latter. The Citizenship Branch is itself, in effect, a promotion agency, with its activities closely linked with those of the Citizenship Registration Branch. Since the information function associated with immigration is directed to an entirely different public—the potential immigrants abroad—it has little in common wth the Indian and citizenship programmes and the existing Information Division's activities might be limited to the Immigration Branch.

Centralization of information services has, of course, the advantage that the special skills required can be developed and used more fully, with a corresponding improvement in the career prospects of the specialists involved. But against this must be set the need for information staffs to be associated as closely as possible with those on whom they depend for their material. This is particularly apparent in the Department of National Health and Welfare, where a single Information Service is shared by the two Branches despite the fact that the promotional job to be done lies almost entirely within the realm of the Deputy Minister of Health. Eighty-five percent of the information work is related to the National Health Branch, and the Information Service should be attached to it. Such a move should improve relations between the information group and the health specialists with whom they work. It should also promote a better balance of health education efforts, now sought inadequately by a sub-committee of the Committee of Principal Medical Officers and Consultants of the Health Services Directorate. As it is, such activities as Occupational Health, Mental Health, Child and Maternal Health and Nutrition have technical or administrative personnel devoting all or most of their time to information work, with little consultation with the Department's general information group.

Centralization of information activity within departments seems, in part at least, to have resulted from an attempt to combine in one unit the quite separate functions of providing general information about departmental policies and operations and conducting promotional programmes. In fact, the two may be incompatible except in departments or agencies like the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, where the promotional function is related to virtually the full range of operations. Elsewhere, the need to be closely associated with the deputy minister (and, through him, with the minister) in general information activity conflicts with the need for promotional pro-

grammes to be designed and executed in close association with the relevant operating units. If, as in the Department of Agriculture, the central Information Division fails to develop close relations with the departmental heads, it may be unable to discharge either task adequately.

Field Organization

The need to reach the public—or a particular element of it—may require that promotional activities be carried into the field. In some instances, the knowledge to be disseminated is relevant only to a particular region—like the findings of fisheries research stations or of certain experimental farms and other research establishments of the Department of Agriculture. In recognition of this, the Information Services Division of the Department of Fisheries has field officers on both coasts collaborating closely with Area Directors of the Department and local research stations, and distributing information to the fishing community and industry through the local press, trade papers and radio. The Department of Agriculture has no organized field information services, but most experimental farms and research laboratories throughout the country engage in local information activities.

Even programmes of country-wide relevance may benefit from a field organization which permits more intimate contact with local news media and with the public itself; however, the appointment of field officers has been rare. The most striking instance is provided by the Department of Fisheries, which has established test kitchens across the country employing home economists to devise and test recipes and household methods of preserving fish, and to promote the consumption of fish through local media and to give demonstrations to women's groups. In contrast to this, the corresponding Consumer Section in the Department of Agriculture, although it recognizes regional differences in methods of preparing and serving food, is concentrated in Ottawa, leaving field activity to the provinces.

Where the federal and provincial governments have a common interest in promotional programmes, provincial administrative machinery may provide a valuable alternative to a federal field organization for purposes of distribution. This is particularly evident in the health education programme of the Department of National Health and Welfare. Because public health is primarily a provincial responsibility, health education material prepared by the Information Services Division is distributed almost entirely by provincial health departments, through local medical officers of health and voluntary organizations. Somewhat similarly, provincial agricultural extension workers are used as one channel of distribution for information material prepared by the federal Department of Agriculture.

5

OPERATING METHODS AND STANDARDS

TECHNIQUES

In discharging its information functions, the federal government makes use, in varying degrees, of all available avenues and techniques of communication: press releases, booklets, posters, clip sheets of spot news, advertising, still photographs, radio talks and dramas, brief television film clips, longer films for general use, displays and demonstrations, envelope "stuffers" with pay cheques and family allowance payments, and, more generally, speeches and correspondence. The selection of techniques by any one department depends on a number of factors, among them the objective, the audience to be reached, the urgency of the specific project, the budget available and the experience and skills of the responsible personnel. Some departments and agencies operate on a scale large enough to justify employment of sizeable staffs of specialists; others have limited needs.

The basic skill required, particularly in promotional programmes, involves the preliminary survey of the audience to be reached, the selection of the most appropriate means, and the measurement of results. Obviously, this demands a general familiarity with and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the various techniques available. A general deficiency in this regard is, in fact, the principal shortcoming noted in the information services of the government.

News Output

Rather surprisingly, it was found that the output of news material to the press has been restrained; a one-month check in May 1961, of the total gov-

ernment publicity received by one metropolitan daily, one small city daily and a large weekly newspaper revealed that most material from government sources was worth while in content, generally acceptable in form and relatively modest in the volume. It was found, however, that the distribution of material is not as selective as it should be; for example, items of interest only to western farmers were distributed across the country. Distribution lists also exhibited the common weakness of not being kept up-to-date, despite the claim of most departments that they check and revise their lists at least every two years.

Printing

The information services of all departments, except Agriculture, and of most agencies procure all printed matter through the Department of Public Printing and Stationery. The service is generally regarded as satisfactory. Your Commissioners are satisfied that the special needs of government information services will be adequately met by the adoption of the recommendations contained in the report on *Printing and Publishing*.

The Publications Section of the Information Division in the Department of Agriculture operates a printing pool, using offset machines, to provide printing services for the whole Department. Present output is nearly fifteen million impressions a year and the unit appears to be efficiently and economically managed. Following a thorough investigation by the Queen's Printer in 1957, a decision was taken to continue this operation. The matter should be reviewed again in the light of the different conditions that will apply if the printing recommendations of your Commissioners are adopted.

No detailed study was made of the content of government publications. However, even a cursory review of the catalogues of the Queen's Printer discloses the diversity of printed matter: departmental reports both general and on specific projects, regulations and standards affecting the public, hearings and decisions of regulatory boards, pamphlets explaining public entitlement under various programmes, research findings ranging from anthropology to zoology, statistical reports, periodicals dealing with a variety of economic and social subjects or directed to groups of special concern to the government, and a plethora of "self-help" booklets for farmers, businessmen, housewives and most other occupational groups (and many hobbyists). As matters now stand, each department or agency is its own judge of what should be published. This involves not only decisions as to what is relevant to departmental objectives but also judgments of public acceptance. No general criteria exist governing what should be published and no provision is made for guidance concerning probable public interest in and demand for specific items.

Lack of general standards and guidance are also found in relation to the free distribution of departmental publications. The aim of distribution without charge may be entirely praiseworthy: to propagate as widely as possible information of potential value to public health or prosperity. But the means can defeat the end because of the low esteem in which "government handouts" may be held. Excessive distribution without charge of material designed merely to publicize departmental operations is even more objectionable on the grounds already noted by your Commissioners. Departments must therefore exercise proper restraint in distributing publications free of charge, and in doing so, they must be guided by criteria of general applicability throughout the public service. In addition, free lists should be kept under constant review and recipients of free material should be circularized periodically—with automatic deletion from the lists unless evidence of continuing interest is forthcoming.

Based on substantial sampling, the quality of writing, with few exceptions, is satisfactory. In promotional material especially, progress is being made in getting away from the unprepossessing appearance once characteristic of all government printing. Professional skill is being applied effectively to improve artwork, layout and typography. The Department of Trade and Commerce, for example, employs a technical staff of nine for its trade promotion material. But progress has been uneven. The *Labour Gazette* has changed little in the fifty-two years of its existence. It is published by a special unit of the Department of Labour and the transfer of this responsibility to the Information Division of the Department should yield some savings and modernize its format.

Departmental Reports

For some publications, elaborate design and artistic embellishment are inappropriate. The annual reports to Parliament of the various departments now vary widely in form and content. While no estimate can be made of the cost of compiling and editing, the printing cost alone is about $200,000 each year. Sales seldom exceed fifty copies of any one report.

These reports contain useful information, but many are padded with material that is readily available from other sources or is of real interest to but a few specialist readers—generally public officials. There is a marked tendency to repeat the same material year after year in elegantly varied phraseology or with variation only in figures.

More serious than the inclusion of unnecessary material is the growing use of annual reports to gain parliamentary and public support by a deliberate emphasis on the more appealing aspects of departmental operations and

plans. A noteworthy symptom of this development is the general disregard of a Treasury Board circular, dated February 9, 1951, which laid down standards of size and quality for annual reports. It banned the use of photographs, discouraged the use of maps, diagrams, and two-colour printing, and stressed the necessity for pertinence and brevity. An examination of sixty annual reports for the year 1961 disclosed that only seven conform to Treasury Board standards in all respects, while of the others:

- Twenty-four were not of standard size.
- Forty-one were on paper of superior quality or heavier weight, or both.
- The covers of fifty-one were of superior quality or heavier weight, or both.
- The covers of twenty-five were embellished with designs or illustrations some in relief, or were printed in two or more colours.
- Twenty-three contained photographs, half-tone illustrations, or multi-colour maps and diagrams.
- The reports ranged from nine to two hundred and fifty-eight pages, with an average of around sixty pages.

Your Commissioners believe that reports to Parliament should be factual and concise and, if well planned, should not require elaboration or artistic embellishment either in form or content to attract readers.

We therefore recommend that: Steps be taken to appraise the purpose and use of annual reports with a view to improving the general standard, eliminating redundant material and reducing the costs of preparation, editing, printing, and free distribution.

Advertising

The practice of employing advertising agencies is not universal in the public service. The Department of Public Works, with an advertising account of around $200,000 a year, manages satisfactorily without an agency. On the other hand, it has been estimated that advertisements placed directly by the Department of Veterans Affairs reach less than one-third of the veterans in Canada and probably an even smaller proportion of surviving dependants to whom the advertising is addressed. Whether to use an advertising agency or to deal directly with the media is a decision that must be based on the relevant circumstances in each case, but it is to be borne in mind that adver-

tising is a technical business, in which the able specialist can be of real assistance in obtaining for his client the greatest coverage for every dollar spent.

By long established practice, advertising agencies are selected at ministerial level. Many agencies render good service, but some have been less conscientious. While there are no important differences in the cost of advertising purchased through one agency or another, there are often vast differences in value received, depending on the quality of the specialist advice and services provided. The same degree of prudence has to be exercised in selecting an advertising agency as in the procurement of any other service and the process of selection should be repeated at regular intervals—not more than about five years—to keep the selected agency on its creative toes.

Coupled with the existing method of selection is a ceiling on the value of government accounts that may be awarded to any one agency. The present limit of $700,000, for which no parallel is to be found in any other government procurement, entails serious disadvantages. A promotional programme, if it is to achieve maximum effect, should be developed as a whole; there is nothing to commend a policy that obliges the Government Travel Bureau, for example, to employ three separate advertising agencies simultaneously to handle a budget of approximately $1,700,000. In a recent instance, an agency giving satisfactory service to a department secured the more lucrative account of a Crown corporation and abandoned the departmental account for the sole reason that the combined total would have exceeded the $700,000 limit.

We therefore recommend that: Advertising accounts be awarded on the basis of competitive proposals in the manner of other government contracts.

The considerations that govern the employment of agencies to handle government advertising accounts cannot be extended, without reservations, to the use of outside firms in public relations activities. Your Commissioners have laid some stress in this report on the distinction that must be drawn between proper and improper publicity, and on the inappropriateness, in government information services, of some basic concepts of industrial public relations. The employment of outside firms to manage government publicity campaigns that are not based on paid advertising can seldom be justified. An arrangement of this kind may be the best way to deal with a particular non-recurrent publicity campaign, especially if the matter is of great urgency or if the department concerned has only a small information unit; but it is not compatible with departmental responsibility for continuing promotional

programmes, still less for the delegated management of departmental information services from day to day.

We therefore recommend that: Outside public relations agencies be employed only to supplement, not as substitutes for, government information service units.

Radio and Television

Apart from their role as news services, radio and television serve as effective media for promotional and educational purposes. Radio is used extensively by a number of departments and agencies and a significant number of government-produced programmes, in the form of talks and dramas, are accepted on their merits by broadcasters who are also generous in donating time for departmental campaigns of national significance. While a small beginning has been made in the provision of short films for use on television, this medium has been used relatively little because of cost. However, some notable successes have been achieved with the broadcasting of films sponsored by departments and produced by the National Film Board. Another technique, the use of which might be extended with advantage, is the distribution of 'fillers'—scripts running from one to three minutes accompanied by still photographs for use on television.

In the course of this inquiry, some criticism of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was encountered, on the grounds that it is less co-operative than private broadcasters in using government-prepared material. However, investigation did not substantiate the critics. Generally the complaint was based on the mistaken view that the Corporation should act as a common service agency at the beck and call of the federal departments and agencies. In fact, the Corporation almost invariably either matches or excels its competitors in its public service broadcasting.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that some departments and agencies are more in need than others of expert counsel and guidance in their approach to radio and television. Technically, and having regard to its main source of revenue, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is clearly in the best position to meet this need, and there is no evidence to suggest that it has been unwilling to do so hitherto. There is evidence, however, that many departments and agencies are unaware of this or uncertain whom to approach. It would therefore be helpful if the Corporation were to nominate an officer, not necessarily on a full-time basis, to direct departments and agencies to the best source of advice and guidance within the Corporation, having regard to the particular nature of the problem in each case.

Film Services

Despite the fact that in the past three decades, the government-owned National Film Board has built up a world-wide reputation in film-making, other federal departments and agencies continue to show little interest in the value and impact of films as a means of public information. In 1960-61, production of films for all departments and agencies, other than the Department of National Defence, cost less than $250,000. The Departments of Agriculture and National Health and Welfare, both of which have major educational or proportional programmes, each spent less than $25,000. The Department of National Defence spent $380,000 on films—but ninety per cent of this represented the cost of training films.

By statute, departments require the authority of the National Film Board before undertaking film projects. Normally, the Board itself produces the films, but it may, if requested by the sponsoring department, contract out the work to commercial producers. It is seldom asked to do so. Some departments produce films and still photographs for their own use—again, the Department of National Defence in particular.

The still photograph division of the National Film Board serves as a centralized government photographic service. Its library has more than 100,000 active prints in stock, with almost as many in its archives. Its newspaper photo service provides a regular means by which newsworthy photographs may reach the daily and weekly press. Some departments also maintain libraries of photographs relating to their operations.

The work of the National Film Board as a central film service for federal departments is, of course, overshadowed by its role as an information organization in its own right. In Canada, more than 10,000 community groups and associations and 30,000 persons take an active part in its film distribution, apart from commercial distribution channels. During 1960-61 its screenings in Canada totalled 420,000. Canadian telecasts of its films numbered 5,400.

Outside Canada, the Film Board has become one of the country's most effective information agencies. More than 50,000 prints of its films are in circulation in seventy-five countries, in English, French and thirty-three other languages. It is estimated that each year its films reach an audience abroad approaching 500 million people. In 1960-61, there were 5,568 telecasts of its films in forty countries, and included in its distribution programme in 1960 were 107 privately-produced Canadian films from seventy-one different sponsors.

The need for specialized information staffs varies from department to department according to the nature of the information function, the range of techniques appropriate to it, and the scale of activities. As has been noted, departments with only a general and diffuse information task, of limited extent, have relatively little need for specialists. As the volume of general information work increases, full-time information officers may become a necessary adjunct to management, but such officers must be chosen primarily for their knowledge of the department and sensitivity to the political implications of its work.

The principal need for specialists is encountered in those information programmes which are undertaken as a service to the public. Even here there may be exceptions like the Meteorological Service, where the actual preparation and distribution of data are so routine as to require no specialist personnel. Generally, however, where promotional or educational programmes are to be devised, making effective use of a variety of techniques, planning and execution should be entrusted to trained and experienced information officers and technicians.

The prime essential is a knowledge of the potentialities and limitations of techniques; actual proficiency in all techniques is rarely needed because this expertise can be found in organizations which make it their business. Individual departments or branches undertaking information programmes can rarely hope to compete with the National Film Board, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Queen's Printer or Canadian Government Exhibition Commission in the mastery of photography and film making, broadcasting, print design or displays and exhibits; most of them recognize this and act accordingly.

The qualifications required in information personnel include both familiarity with the material to be publicized and an understanding of the forms and techniques of presentation. A choice may have to be made between an administrator with a flair for communications and a professional publicist with the versatility needed to understand and interpret widely assorted material. The best results are likely to be achieved by a judicious mixture of professionals and publicity-conscious administrators.

Classification and Remuneration

Men with the requisite qualifications are not numerous, and the government must compete with private employers for their services. The remuneration and opportunities for promotion in the civil service have not, in recent years,

attracted the people needed. In the course of the inquiry, for example, it was found that:

- A recent open competition for a director of one information service failed to produce an eligible candidate and approval was reluctantly given for the upgrading of the position.
- In another department two successive competitions failed to attract suitable information officers.
- In April, 1961, the Information Services Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare was at full numerical strength for the first time in nine years.
- Out of thirty-five positions in the Trade Publicity Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce, five were vacant in November, 1961.
- The post of head of the Publicity Section of the Government Travel Bureau was vacant for more than six months.
- In another information service, two senior positions for editors, out of a total of four, had been vacant for eight months.
- The Press and Publicity Section of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics had been without a head almost continuously for nineteen months.

This is not an exhaustive listing.

Job specifications are often undesirably restrictive, especially in the higher grades where the notional distinctions between editing, information work, and public relations become progressively unrealistic. Too rigid an insistence on specific background and experience often has the effect of eliminating generally suitable candidates. In most departments and agencies, vacancies in information units remain unfilled for protracted periods while the rituals of classification and reclassification proceed like a stately saraband, with little logic evident in the results.

It is not uncommon to find, in the same unit, comparable editorial work being done by people classified as Editors, Information Officers, Technical Officers, and Administrative Officers. In a recent instance, a department insisted on an amendment to a job specification making a university degree a mandatory qualification; approval was belatedly secured, but the vacancies were advertised at the same salary as before. Often, in desperation, resort is had to evasion and subterfuge. The normal top classification for a departmental information director is Information Officer 7, but in some departments and agencies higher remuneration is provided by assigning the responsibility

to an Administrative Officer or a Technical Officer of a higher grade. The artificiality of existing fine distinctions in classification is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the information officer of the Civil Service Commission itself is not an Information Officer but a Civil Service Commission Officer.

Many of the problems described are but particular examples of common deficiencies in personnel administration in the public service, and the recommendations in the report on *Personnel Management* apply with as much force in the field of information services as elsewhere. The existing situation is not only unsatisfactory but harmful, and remedial measures should be undertaken without delay.

We therefore recommend that: Reconsideration be given to the classification structure and scales of remuneration related to information services throughout the Civil Service.

Training

The rationalization of classifications and salaries will facilitate the recruitment and retention of experienced information officers from outside the public service, but there will be an increasing need for guidance in adapting their attitudes, methods and techniques to the special requirements and standards of government information services. Conversely, the public servant with only administrative experience who transfers to information work is in need of training to familiarize him with the expertise of his new vocation. While the information service in each department and agency must develop and use the methods best suited to its own purpose, the basic principles are common to all, and a skilfully planned training programme would have the additional merit of promoting a more uniform approach to the special information problems of the public service.

At present, there are no organized training courses covering all aspects of information services, either in the government or indeed anywhere in Canada. Two Canadian universities have schools of journalism where some aspects of information work are taught, but neither deals exclusively with the subject. A high proportion of the public relations officers of the three Armed Forces have attended, by invitation, the intensive ten-week information courses conducted by the United States Army at Fort Slocum, N.Y., and the results are reflected in improved relations with the mass media and a more effective operation in all respects. But for those departments and agencies charged with promotional tasks, this kind of training is not available. Much could be done

in the way of specialized practical training within individual government organization, or by organized courses available to the public service at large. Some haphazard but praiseworthy efforts in this direction were observed, but in too many instances staff shortages leave little opportunity for any activity that is not of immediate urgency.

An interesting experiment has recently been undertaken by the Post Office to supplement the education and training of information officers serving in the field. Headquarters supervision of information services outside Ottawa is now assigned to field men serving in rotation for a period of six months each. This arrangement has the dual merit of widening the area of conformity in public relations practices and ensuring that the special problems of the field services are given due attention and weight in the formulation of policies and plans at headquarters. Should this scheme stand up over a reasonable period of time, it may serve as a model for other departments and agencies with regional information or public relations operations.

The written guidance afforded to information officers in the public service is scanty. Only a few departments and agencies have introduced anything in the way of a manual and those that exist are mostly incomplete and of indifferent value. The only comprehensive manual in the federal government is that of the Department of National Defence, and this, unfortunately reflects an emphasis on public relations techniques which your Commissioners consider misplaced. Steps should be taken to produce a comprehensive manual of government information policy and practice, for the training and guidance of information officers throughout the public service and for the enlightenment of senior administrators.

BUDGETING AND ACCOUNTS

The present form of the Estimates and Public Accounts gives no indication of the true cost of information services. That part of the cost that seems to be identifiable often includes other kinds of activity, and some information programmes are concealed under headings which afford no clue. It is rare to encounter any evidence of planning in terms of broad policies, long-range objectives, and the resources necessary to their achievement, or even of any attempt to relate available staff and resources to specific targets in the year ahead. The more general rule is improvisation in response to unforeseen requirements and day-to-day pressures—a way of life that is extravagant and wasteful.

Adoption of the recommendations in the report on *Financial Management* will require that publicity costs of government programmes be included as

part of the programme budgets. This is not done under the present classification by objects of expenditure. Nor, for that matter, can the total cost of information services now be measured. Services purchased from external services are reflected in the standard object headed "Exhibits, Advertising, Films, Broadcasting and Displays". But the cost of projects or programmes produced within the government service are distributed over the full range of such other objects of expenditure as salaries, professional and special services, publication and office stationery. The recommended form of estimates and accounts would allocate information costs to the programmes to which they relate and would identify as a separate item only that information activity of a general nature where apportionment would be inappropriate or arbitrary.

6

INFORMATION SERVICES IN FRENCH AND THE BUREAU FOR TRANSLATIONS

Canada is now a country of many tongues, with the *British North America Act* declaring English and French the official languages. Departments of government may, in projecting their programmes, aim at groups of varying linguistic origins, but will do so generally in English and French, with copy most frequently originating in English. To maintain standards of textual equivalence requires a staff of translators who are skilful in converting an English text into a version which commands the respect and interest of French readers and *vice versa*. Where it does not, the intended message goes unread. This need is met, in the main, by the Bureau for Translations, the duties and functions of which are declared by statute to be:

> 3. (1) ... to collaborate with and act for all departments of the Public Service, and both Houses of Parliament of Canada, and all bureaus, branches, commissions, and agencies created or appointed by Act of Parliament, or by the Governor in Council, in making and revising all translations from one language into another of all departmental and other reports, documents, debates, bills, acts, proceedings and correspondence.

This section of the Act is less sweeping than it is taken to be in some departments and agencies. It does not say, for example, that all the material described *must* be translated from English into French or *vice versa*. To the extent that the public service can be made more bilingual, the need for translation of correspondence and internal working papers should diminish.

Translation is not and can never be a purely mechanical process which can be undertaken by anyone with a working knowledge of both languages. It must, if it is to be effective, be a paraphrase which takes account of idiom

as well as syntax. The professional translator of informational material must have a broad cultural background to enable him to reach beyond comparable idiom and seek equivalent image. To arrive at the best equivalent of a particular slogan or forceful metaphor may take as many hours as several hundred words of routine translation. Scientific and technical material presents problems that take longer to solve than those of an ordinary text.

Too little attention is paid to these factors in assessing the performance of translators; some general quantitative standards may be desirable but, for example, a rigid insistence on an output of 2,000 words a day must necessarily have an adverse effect on quality, particularly in those special areas where high quality is essential if the material is to achieve its purpose. For these reasons, the practice of circulating periodical statements of personal performance in terms of the number of words translated, without regard to quality or technical difficulty, does not commend itself to your Commissioners.

In Canada, translation between English and French presents peculiar problems. In each language many words have acquired connotations unknown in the country of origin. French in Canada has absorbed different anglicisms from those adopted in France, as well as many American words and terms, and no good French-American dictionary is available. English usage in Canada has accepted American meanings of some words but adheres to the British meanings of others.

One result is that the work of the Translation Bureau is criticized by French-speaking Canadians on diametrically opposite grounds. Cultured people complain, often with good reason, that translations are too literal, instantly recognizable as hybrids between English syntax and French words. Others deplore a literary standard above and beyond the workaday comprehension of those to whom the material is addressed, particularly in the technical field, where the English or American vocabulary is often better understood than that of France by French-speaking Canadians. To offset this, the Bureau operates a Terminology Service which co-operates with similar bodies in other countries and with international organizations. The glossaries and terminological bulletins published by the Bureau are intended and accepted as a national service, and are in great demand by the French-language press of Canada.

The Translation Bureau also undertakes translations into and from other languages, as may be required by departments and agencies for their special purposes. For the Department of Trade and Commerce, for instance, promotional material is translated into German, Dutch, Flemish, Afrikaans, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, Czech, Polish, and Japanese—this list is not,

of course, exhaustive as regards the public service as a whole. The Department of Trade and Commerce makes a practice of sending these translations to its Trade Commissioners in the countries concerned, to be checked by native linguists, and the work of the Bureau stands up well under this kind of testing. The whole output of the Bureau, in all languages and for all purposes, is of the order of 100 million words a year.

To deal with the great body of general translation, the Bureau seconds translators who serve more or less permanently with particular departments and agencies. The assignments are made by relating, as far as possible, academic and cultural qualifications and background to the type of work to be done, but it is often nearly impossible to recruit translators qualified in specific scientific disciplines. Satisfaction with the service thus afforded is not universal and independent translation services have been set up for some purposes by the National Research Council, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and other agencies, with salaries at a level in some instances above what the Bureau is permitted to offer for similar work. Regardless of whether these operations contravene the intent of the *Translation Bureau Act*, it is clearly undesirable that the Bureau should be subjected to competition from other federal agencies in recruiting and retaining competent translators.

When the Bureau for Translations was established in 1934, the salaries offered to translators, although not excessive, were generally more attractive than those offered either by the press or by commerce and industry, but conditions have so changed, particularly since the war, that this is no longer the case. Approximately ten per cent of the two hundred and twenty-six positions for translators in the Bureau are generally vacant, and during the past year over thirty translators left to take better paid or more congenial employment elsewhere. Recruiting from outside the service is handicapped by the difficulty of securing consent to appointments at salaries above $5,000 a year, although specialized qualifications may be pertinent and the need urgent. As a result, the Bureau is seldom in a position to compete with others for experienced and highly qualified translators. The Government of Canada, under a constitutional obligation to be as articulate in French as in English, can ill afford not to be competitive with private enterprise in recruiting and retaining competent translators.

We therefore recommend that: Consideration be given to a review of the classification, remuneration, and career opportunities for translators throughout the public service.

In addition, attention should be given to the special need for scientists for translation duties. A possible solution would be the establishment of temporary appointments for a term of, say, six months or a year, open to young scientists with Master's degrees and carrying salaries comparable to those being offered at the starting level in their own professions. For general translators, too, the door should be opened for recruitment of persons with special aptitude or proven experience, at grades higher than at present. But the existing problem will not be solved by financial inducements only; attention should be directed to providing better career opportunities and working conditions. A substantial amount of translation work is not of immediate urgency and can be done anywhere. Some effort could be made to take this work to the potential translators who, for one reason or another, cannot be attracted to work in Ottawa. Consideration might well be given to the establishment of a subsidiary translation unit to be located in the Province of Quebec, not necessarily in the City of Montreal.

There is abundant evidence that the two hundred and twenty-six positions for translators presently authorized for the Bureau would be insufficient even if there were no vacancies. In the last seven years only nineteen additional positions have been authorized, and while the numbers assigned to some departments and agencies have increased in line with the volume of work, in others there have been no additional assignments for ten years or more, although in some cases workloads have doubled. Staff shortages have an adverse effect on the quality of translations and limit the number of publications that appear in French. They have also caused inordinate delays. Most departments and agencies make some attempt to achieve simultaneous news releases in French and English, but exceptions are sufficiently frequent to arouse violent criticism from representatives of the French press. It is therefore of practical significance that such complaints are rare when news releases are dealt with by bilingual information officers. For material that is not of 'spot news' urgency, the time lapse between release of English and French versions may range from three to twelve months.

Some delays are unavoidable, particularly where the material to be translated necessarily employs an abstruse technical vocabulary, or where maps, diagrams, or other illustrations must be engraved or otherwise produced before the French version can be adapted to the layout. These considerations do not apply, however, to a monthly publication like the *Labour Gazette,* the French edition of which now normally appears from three to five weeks after the English, although both used to be issued almost simultaneously. The French edition of *The Postmark,* the staff magazine of the Post Office Department, is sometimes as much as three months behind the English

edition—a circumstance that can hardly serve to promote *esprit de corps.* Only seventeen pages of the 1959-60 Annual Report of the Fisheries Research Board—which ran to one hundred and ninety-six pages in all—were published simultaneously in French and English, and even this gesture delayed the publication of the report for five months. The Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries has appeared in French as long as eighteen months after its English counterpart, while the French edition of the Army *History of the War* was released more than two years after the English edition.

When the material to be published is of topical interest or importance, delays of this order may render the belated French version useless. It was noted, for example, that research reports of the Department of Agriculture—generally of equal interest to French and English agricultural periodicals and often having special application to current problems—may appear in French two or three years after the English edition, even when they have been prepared by experimental farms or research stations located in the Province of Quebec for the express purpose of investigating local problems. During the survey the Department of Trade and Commerce issued a publication entitled *Market Opportunities Abroad.* The Chambre de Commerce de Montreal, acting for similar French-speaking bodies, immediately applied for fifty copies in French but it was five weeks before they were available. In the meantime, a summary in French was prepared by the Chambre and distributed to all interested parties. As a result, over two thousand copies of the belated official French version remained in stock in Ottawa.

The present unsatisfactory situation is not wholly attributable to shortage of staff, nor is the Translation Bureau primarily to blame. The Bureau, as a service agency, has no control over what is to be translated nor when the English text will be made available. Under the *Translation Bureau Act*:

> 3. (2) It is the duty of all departments of the Public Service and all such branches, commissions, and agencies as aforesaid, to collaborate with the Bureau in carrying into effect the provisions of this Act and regulations.

This obligation is too often ignored and translators assigned to departments are seldom, if ever, kept informed of work in preparation. Moreover, publication in French sometimes cannot proceed because the necessary budgetary provision was not made, or translation may be undertaken only because of the unexpected popularity of the English edition. An example is the physical fitness booklet, 5BX, produced by the Royal Canadian Air Force. This unexpectedly had enormous sales in Canada and abroad. The original plan called for an English version only, so about two years lapsed before copies in French were available. Those in charge of information services should recognize the importance of advance planning and facilitate simultaneous publication by

arranging for concurrent translation while material is in preparation. An excellent example of what can be achieved in this way is the recent publication by the National Capital Commission of *The Queen's Choice,* by Wilfred Eggleston, which was translated into French by instalments as each chapter was completed by the author.

Were it not for the fact that much of the current information material appears only in English, the delays in publishing French versions would be greater than they are. In 1960-61, the Queen's Printer published 3,586 texts in English, but only 866 in French. Of 515 current publications of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, only about a quarter are available in French, although the proportion by volume is higher than this by reason of the French editions of such weighty items as the *Canada Year Book* and the monthly *Statistical Review.*

No assessment of potential reader interest is valid unless it is related to equivalent material simultaneously published. Where this is done, experience is that the demand for French and English editions is in close proportion to the French-speaking and English-speaking population, even when the subject is specialized or of a technical nature. The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources maintains a mailing-list of those desiring copies of all information published on gas and oil resource developments, which is issued simultaneously in both languages. Four hundred recipients asked for the release in English and 265 in French. Publication in both languages should be regarded as not an extravagance but as an essential service to the Canadian public.

Analysis of the present unsatisfactory state of affairs is apt to be obscured by misapprehensions of emotional origin and a tendency to draw unjustifiable general conclusions from particular circumstances. There is little evidence, and none that is incontrovertible, of any discrimination against French-speaking information officers, either in recruitment or promotion. The fact is that the shortage of experienced bilingual information officers, both inside and outside the public service, is even more acute than the shortage of competent translators. It is therefore necessary that attention also be directed to the government's need for bilingual information officers in the review, recommended earlier in this report, of the classification structure and scales of remuneration for information officers in general. At present, there is only one departmental director of information services who is bilingual; some departments and agencies, either more assiduous or luckier than others, have bilingual information officers at other levels.

In almost every department and agency there is an urgent need that more

information originate in French and for better co-ordination of French and English material in advance of publication.

We therefore recommend that:

1 Steps be taken to attract more bilingual information officers to the public service.

2 In every department and agency, full bilingualism be made a mandatory qualification for at least one of the top positions in the information service unit.

Maintenance of the Bureau for Translations is clearly desirable for a variety of purposes: to ensure uniformity of standards and a professional approach to the translation of parliamentary papers and records, and formal and legal documents of all kinds; to provide a common service for translation involving foreign languages; and to provide the broadest possible career basis for translators. Existing arrangements whereby Bureau personnel work in the various departments and agencies should be continued, and extended, in order to permit the most flexible use of translators, adjusting their postings to constantly shifting needs.

At the same time, the recommendations put forward in this report and elsewhere should lessen the burden of routine translation borne by the Bureau. First, greater bilingualism among information officers would permit the preparation of material by information services in either language, each version being adapted to the language group to which it is directed. In addition the general increase in bilingualism in the administrative ranks, which was urged in the report on *Personnel Management,* would reduce the need for translation into English of correspondence received from French Canada and the subsequent translation into French of draft replies.

7

CO-ORDINATION OF INFORMATION SERVICES

The picture that emerges of public information services in the government is one of a general blur of diffuse activity, with growing clusters of organization. Central planning, direction and co-ordination are lacking. Scanning this picture, it is hard to realize that not so long ago the organized information services in the Government of Canada were highly centralized in both planning and execution. In preparing to put itself on a war footing, the federal government in 1939 established a public information committee of the Cabinet. This was followed almost immediately by the establishment of a Directorate of Public Information in November 1939, later succeeded by the Wartime Information Board. Of necessity, wartime staffs were recruited outside the public service—largely from the publishing, radio and advertising fields and from universities.

As special departments and agencies were created and old-time departments drawn more directly into the war effort, they also set up information services. Almost inevitably, there was competition for public attention and over-lapping of effort. This was greatly reduced by the formation, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister of National War Services, of an interdepartmental co-ordination committee, which devised an orderly, non-competitive scheduling of news releases and advertisements. Through reciprocal disclosure of plans, arrangements were made between departments having overlapping interests that one attend to the interests of all on a given topic. Production and distribution services of the central group were frequently used by all with measurable reductions in costs.

At the end of the war, this co-ordinating machinery was dismantled, together with the Wartime Information Board itself. Since then, the departmental and agency services have developed and operated largely independently one of the other.

With one notable exception, the fragmentation of information services has much in its favour. Strong internal loyalties in departments and agencies are often powerful factors in the successful pursuit of objectives and should not be discouraged. Moreover, for maximum effect, promotional activities are best planned and directed in close association with the research and other programmes to which they relate. The exception is that noted in Chapter 3—Information Services Abroad—and your Commissioners would reiterate here the importance they attach to the recommendation for improved co-ordination of such services.

In domestic information services there is not the same need that information services of the government speak with one voice. Declarations and explanations of government policy should not, of course, be contradictory, but the guarantee of this lies not in the unification of information services but in the effective co-ordination of policy itself. In a government which rests on public opinion, fragmentation of the information function may, in fact, be reassuring. In promotional programmes, an element of rivalry may be natural and proper. There is nothing incongruous in the Department of Agriculture promoting meat while the Department of Fisheries promotes fish consumption.

For maximum effect, however, a concerting of efforts is desirable. For example, the present over-lapping of publicity by the Department of Labour and the Unemployment Insurance Commission in support of the winter works programme weakens impact. Dispersal of effort was also noted in information activities relating to labour relations, between the Department of Labour and the Labour-Management Co-operation Committee. In the nutritional field, good co-operation exists between the Consumer Section of the Department of Agriculture and the Nutrition Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare, but the catalogue of the Queen's Printer lists a variety of publications by the latter department and also by the Armed Forces, all dealing with the planning and preparation of meals. This indicates a lack of co-ordination both in programme effort and in publishing. An example of what is desirable is the *Medical Services Journal, Canada.* It is edited and produced by the Department of Veterans Affairs, but managed by an editorial board representative of that department, National Defence and National Health and Welfare and financed jointly by the three. In the advertising programmes of various departments, little attention has been given to the

potential of advertising space available in the many government publications that enjoy a good circulation founded on reader demand. Thus, many a good opportunity may be going to waste.

A special problem exists in areas of joint federal and provincial concern, or where provincial programmes are supported and reinforced by federal activities. In this regard, both strengths and weaknesses can be seen. Travel and tourism publicity is well co-ordinated, and health education efforts are concerted through biennial conferences with continuing consultation in the intervening period. In agricultural matters, however, only a start has been made; senior information and extension officers of the federal and provincial governments met for the first time in 1961 to discuss common problems and possible co-operative arrangements. The area of potential duplication in agriculture and related matters is growing. Having regard to provincial responsibilities for resources generally, the federal departments concerned with conservation, production, marketing and use are under an obligation to seek co-operative arrangements. The means of federal-provincial co-ordination cannot be developed by a central agency in the federal government; consequently, the responsibility for identifying needs and initiating joint action rests with the departments.

In general, consultation among information services is rare and joint programmes are rarer still—an information unit of a department seldom looks over its own fence. Your Commissioners do not believe in compulsion to achieve co-operation because this may seriously undermine departmental initiative. But co-ordination can be facilitated and promoted by central encouragement and guidance. Somewhere in government there should be a lookout from which the broad sweep of the information landscape can be viewed with reasonable detachment and the perspective kept in focus.

Co-ordinating arrangements within the federal government can, moreover, contribute to the more effective use of the specialized resources employed by the various departments and agencies. Existing arrangements which assign almost complete responsibility for film-making to the National Film Board and for printing to the Queen's Printer meet part of this need. In passing it is noted that while the Queen's Printer is not vested with any statutory power to control what is printed, the approval of the National Film Board is required for any departmental film projects. What is needed is a general source of guidance and assistance—which, in fact, is the role of the Film Board. With respect to printing, the growing expertise and advisory services of the Queen's Printer in matters of design, artwork and typography is to be commended, but more is necessary. General criteria are needed governing the content of publications programmes, and departments require expert advice

on the probable extent of public interest in proposed publications and, especially, the probable sales market at prices which will recover costs of publication, if not of preparation.

In this connection, attention is drawn to the recommendation of your Commissioners, in their report on *Printing and Publishing*, that management of the two functions indicated in that title be separated, and a Queen's Publisher be established. The aim is to distinguish between the mechanical and the creative. The weight and prestige attaching to the office of Queen's Publisher should command the respect of administrators and the professional loyalty of information officers throughout the public service, and enable the Queen's Publisher to serve as the focal point needed for the co-ordination of information services. Among the functions which should be assigned to the Queen's Publisher are:

- To identify areas of over-lapping concern to information services in the various departments and agencies and foster consultation between and joint action by the relevant organizations.
- To set standards of quality in the design and production of government publications of all kinds.
- To provide leadership in the development of professional standards throughout the information services of the government, and, in consultation with senior information officers and other specialized agencies, to prepare standard manuals for general use and determine the need for common training facilities and courses.
- To assist in providing career opportunities for information officers, and to act as expert counsel to the departments and agencies and to the Personnel Division of the Treasury Board on matters of classification and remuneration.
- To provide guidance to departments and agencies concerning the potential markets for publications in each language.
- To advise ministers and assist the Treasury Board in appraising the information-service element of departmental programmes and in assessing performance.

We therefore recommend that: 1 The responsibilities attaching to the office of Queen's Publisher, as proposed in the report on *Printing and Publishing*, include the provision of expert counsel to departments and agencies, and to the

Treasury Board, in matters relating to the operation of government information services, other than those aspects for which such agencies as the National Film Board or Canadian Government Exhibition Commission may be given a special responsibility.

2 A small committee of senior information officers drawn from the departments and agencies be formed, under the chairmanship of the Queen's Publisher, to review and advise on co-ordination of public information policy and activity throughout the public service.